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ESSAYS  
IN  
ETHICS AND RELIGION





*From a photograph by Moffat in 1910.*

ESSAYS  
IN  
ETHICS AND RELIGION  
WITH OTHER PAPERS

BY  
JAMES SETH, M.A., LL.D.

LATE PROFESSOR OF MORAL PHILOSOPHY  
IN THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

*EDITED WITH A SHORT MEMOIR*

BY  
A. SETH PRINGLE-PATTISON

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS  
EDINBURGH AND LONDON  
MCMXXVI



## PREFACE

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IN the autumn of 1923, before the sudden breakdown of his health, my brother was turning over in his mind the idea of a volume of collected essays, which should include the chief papers he had contributed to the philosophical journals during the twenty-five years of his Edinburgh professorship, as well as some others which had not previously appeared in print. Soon after this, however, as stated in the Memoir, he definitely resolved to retire from his university-work at the age of sixty-five, and his idea of the volume took in consequence a somewhat different shape. It was not to consist mainly of old material collected and republished : by the addition of a number of essays freshly written he intended to make it a careful statement of his mature thought on the subjects which he had most at heart and which were at the time most in the public eye. A tentative list of twelve essays, nine of which were to be new, survives among his papers, along with a fragmentary note for the Preface. The title was to be a plain one, 'Essays in Ethics,' the term Essays to be understood, the note says, "rather in its literal than in its literary meaning, as 'attempts' at the solution of difficult and far-reaching problems." Alas ! not one of

the nine new essays contemplated exists even in draft, and the present volume must be a compromise.

The desire for a memorial volume of some kind is natural in the case of one who has been called away in the midst of his activities, and in my brother's case the desire was widely expressed. I have consulted several of his friends and my own on the subject, and we have all felt that while such a volume should contain a complete record of the author's literary work, it would be a mistake to overload it by an indiscriminate reprint of articles, some of them occasional in their origin, or the substance of which, in other cases, is adequately represented in his 'Study of Ethical Principles.' Papers included, whether already in print or not, should be either such as elaborate some critical point of special interest or such as illuminate some phase of the writer's convictions which could not find appropriate expression in a volume of that scope or in his ordinary class teaching. I have been guided by these principles in making the present selection.

To the first class belongs the article here reprinted on "The Alleged Fallacies in Mill's Utilitarianism," in which my brother took a special interest, and to which he had given the first place in his projected volume. It does not profess to defend Mill's argument as a logical proof of the Utilitarian doctrine. Its contention rather is that Mill in his treatise is not attempting any such logical proof, and is therefore innocent of the gross and palpable fallacies with which his critics have so freely charged him. It was welcomed by lovers of Mill at the time of its appearance as a vindication of a great writer by a more large-minded interpretation of his purpose.

To the second class belong the paper on "The Christian Ethic" and its natural sequel, "On Certain Alleged Defects in the Christian Morality." The former was

originally given as a Presidential Address to the Theological Society of New College, Edinburgh, and is here printed for the first time. The latter was delivered as a Murtle Lecture in the University of Aberdeen in 1907, and afterwards published in the 'Hibbert Journal.' Both were included by my brother in the volume he had planned. Alongside of them, at the risk of occasional overlapping, I have put two other unpublished Addresses found among his papers, one on "Morality and Religion," the other on "Christianity and Socialism." The first, a Presidential Address to another Students' Society in 1901, might be described as a homily on the office of the preacher and the duty of the Churches, and the warmth of conviction perceptible throughout gives it a personal significance. The second, written on internal evidence in 1908 or 1909, discusses the social application of ethical and religious principles, the subject which in later years increasingly occupied his thoughts. These four papers, taken together, constitute so large a proportion of the present volume that the modified title, 'Essays in Ethics and Religion,' has been adopted as indicating most accurately the nature of its contents. Ethics and religion met for the writer in the social idealism which inspired so much of his thought and activity.

The essay on "The Practical Interest of Ethics, Casuistical and Social," to which I have given the first place, was written in 1905 as the first of a short course of Donkin Lectures delivered in Manchester College, Oxford, in the Michaelmas term of that year, on "The Principles of Social Ethics." There is no record of the lectures which followed, but this one is complete in itself, and, in the light of the conclusions reached, it will be found, I think, to repay perusal.

The concluding paper, on "Methods of Instruction in

Philosophy," formed an Introductory Lecture to his class in 1907, and was afterwards published in a short-lived periodical. It is here reprinted because it is a reasoned defence of the method which he employed with conspicuous success in his own classroom. In their public and private tribute to his work, his pupils constantly refer to his method of conducting his classes as one main secret of the vitality of his teaching. So marked a feature of his teaching was it that I have thought it not unfitting to reproduce in the Appendix the lively sketch of "Professor James Seth and his Classroom," which appeared in 'The Student' of 1908. The play of undergraduate humour does not obscure the genuine appreciation and kindly feeling of the writer, and the clever drawing which accompanied the letterpress may be welcomed by old students as a life-like representation of the professor in action.

Besides the prominence given to discussion, a characteristic feature of the Moral Philosophy classroom was the professor's discouragement, and eventually his prohibition, of the common practice of continuous note-taking. This practice, he held, distracted the students' attention, and rendered them incapable of following the sequence of thought in the lecture or appreciating the balance and cumulative effect of the whole. He insisted, therefore, on the complete attention of the class to the spoken word of the lecture as it proceeded ; and, as an aid to memory, he was in the habit of dictating a short summary of the argument at the close. In later years these summaries, instead of being dictated, were printed and distributed to the class. The order of topics varied considerably from year to year, as well as the extent of the ground covered, and no single annual series of summaries professes therefore to give a conspectus of the subject as a whole. Two typical speci-

mens, however, are here printed, one belonging to the earlier years in Edinburgh, the other of quite recent date. They illustrate at once the method followed and the substance of the teaching given. I have also included the two Graduation Addresses which it fell to my brother to give during his tenure of the Edinburgh Chair. They seemed sufficiently characteristic of the man to be worth preserving in this way.

It only remains for me to thank all the friends who have helped me with their advice in the selection of the papers and the arrangement of the lecture-summaries. I am specially indebted to Mr R. P. Hardie, Mr H. F. Hallett, and the Rev. W. R. Forrester in this respect, and Mr Hallett has also been kind enough to read the volume in proof.

A. SETH PRINGLE-PATTISON.

EDINBURGH,  
*December 1925.*





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JAMES SETH, M.A., LL.D. . . . .	<i>Frontispiece</i>
<i>From a photograph by Moffat in 1910</i>	
PROFESSOR SETH—AS SUCH . . . . .	<i>Facing p. 181</i>

## MEMOIR

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JAMES SETH was born at Edinburgh, 6th May 1860, the son of Smith Kinmont Seth and Margaret Little. Although by birth a townsman, he came both on the father's and the mother's side of country stock. His paternal grandfather, William Seth, was a well-to-do farmer in the east of Fife, latterly at Rires, near Kilconquhar, and many of the boy's happiest memories were of long summer holidays there and the noble prospect of the Firth of Forth which the place commanded. His mother's family had been connected for several generations with Langholm, on the Scottish Border, where they owned some land. His maternal grandfather, Andrew Little, after a voyage to America in 1805 to investigate prospects there, eventually settled near Lauder in Berwickshire, where, with the aid of one of his brothers, who remained unmarried, he purchased the farm of Middle Blainslie in 1814. The two brothers farmed the place together till 1848, when they found themselves able to retire to Edinburgh with a small competence. Margaret, the youngest but one of Andrew's children, was then in her eighteenth year. Smith Seth, her future husband, the youngest of a large family, had entered the service of one of the Scottish banks, and removed to Edinburgh about the same time, or soon

after, on his appointment to a clerkship in the Head Office of the Commercial Bank there. The two were married in 1854, and James Seth was their third son. Of their family of seven, four sons and two daughters grew up to manhood and womanhood.

Edinburgh has long been famous as an educational centre, and the Secondary Schools opened by the Merchant Company in 1871 added to the facilities in that direction. After a full course at George Watson's College, one of these schools, under the headmastership of Dr George Ogilvie, for whom he retained a lifelong admiration and regard, James Seth passed on to the University in the autumn of 1876. The classical training at George Watson's had been good, and in his earlier sessions Seth took an honourable place in the classes of Latin and Greek; but it was when he reached the philosophical classes that his natural affinities declared themselves, and he rose at once to distinction. In the session of 1879 he was first Medallist in Moral Philosophy, gaining also a special medal awarded for the study of Kant. Specialising in Philosophy in his concluding session, he was first Medallist in the Advanced Class of Metaphysics, and took his degree as Master of Arts with First Class Honours in April 1881. He was awarded in succession two philosophical Scholarships in his own university, and gained in 1882 the Ferguson Scholarship in Philosophy open to graduates of all the four Scottish Universities.

The Professors of Philosophy in Edinburgh at that time were Alexander Campbell Fraser (Logic and Metaphysics) and Henry Calderwood (Moral Philosophy). Fraser, who had been chosen as a representative of Scottish Philosophy to succeed Sir William Hamilton in 1856, had established his reputation in the philosophical world by his great edition of Berkeley's works in

1871, and was effectively using in the classroom Berkeley's questions regarding the independent existence and causal action of the material world as a means of introducing his students to the deeper questions of philosophy. He was in the plenitude of his powers and was notably successful in awakening and stimulating the philosophical spirit in his best students. He had by that time worked his way to his own characteristic statement of Spiritual Idealism as a philosophy of the universe, involving at its root an element of Faith—a *via media*, therefore, between the Agnosticism then current in scientific circles and the Gnosticism (as he was fond of calling it by way of contrast) represented by Hegelianism, with its apparent claim, as he deemed, to omniscience. Calderwood, whom Seth was destined to succeed some twenty years later, was a thinker of a different stamp. Without possessing Fraser's speculative force and meditative insight into the ultimate problems, he was a clear and vigorous thinker and a keen debater. But he did not exercise the same intellectual influence upon his best pupils, who were on the whole dissatisfied with the Intuitional scheme which he offered them in his 'Handbook' and in his lectures. Though a traditional contention of the Scottish school, the doctrine seemed difficult to reconcile with the gradual evolution of human morality; and in those who were really endeavouring to think things out, it tended, therefore, to provoke a reaction in the direction of the Utilitarianism so sympathetically presented by Mill, or of the deeper-going constructions of Kant and Hegel. But the discussions which thus arose between the professor and his students, and among the students themselves, kept the interest of the class alive, and were in themselves a discipline in philosophic thinking. The general interest in the subject of study was, indeed,

probably keener in the Moral Philosophy classroom than in any other University class ; and, when properly handled, the method of free discussion may well claim to be the ideal method of instruction in philosophy. Although firmly entrenched in his own positions, Calderwood was eminently fair-minded in debate, and his fine natural courtesy prevented the discussions from degenerating into a wrangle. It may be noted that Seth, when he came to be professor in Edinburgh, continued the tradition of the Moral Philosophy classroom in this respect ; and as he proceeded the method of discussion became more and more characteristic of his teaching.

Beyond the walls of the University there were many intellectual influences at work in the later 'seventies. The transformation effected in all departments of thought by the biological doctrine of evolution was only beginning to be fully felt in that decade. Controversy was still keen in view of the materialistic deductions drawn from the Darwinian theory by some of its early advocates. The philosophical interpretation of the conception of evolution had still to be worked out : the new doctrine had to be shown to be not inconsistent with a spiritual view of the universe and of human history. This process of mental readjustment was greatly facilitated for young men of University age by their introduction about the same time to the serious study of Kant and his idealistic successors in Germany. Within the Universities the impulse in this direction was given by Green in Oxford and Edward Caird in Glasgow. Green's edition of Hume, with its searching analysis of English Empiricism, appeared in 1874, and Caird's 'Philosophy of Kant' in 1877. The Edinburgh Professors of Philosophy were somewhat critical of the new movement, but Hutchison Stirling, the author of 'The Secret of Hegel' (1865), was an Edinburgh citizen,

and Edinburgh students of philosophy were not unaffected by the reports which reached them from Caird's enthusiastic pupils in Glasgow. For a considerable time Fraser saw most of his best men devoting themselves with a similar zest to the study of this new way of ideas and the unfamiliar terminology in which it clothed itself. Robert Adamson, who graduated in 1871, set the example : his Shaw Lectures on the Philosophy of Kant were delivered in Edinburgh in 1879, and published in the same year. Adamson was followed by D. G. Ritchie, W. R. Sorley, and R. B. Haldane—all of them well known later by their philosophical writings. These and many others less distinguished used to frequent the University Philosophical Society, where senior students and recent graduates met to hold high debate on all the controversial issues of the day. It was distinctly an epoch of intellectual expansion, with an eagerness in the forward look, and Seth was open to all the influences of the time and place. He took an active part in the fruitful interchange of ideas which marked the Philosophical Society, as well as later in the Theological Society of New College.

In the autumn of 1881, after the completion of his Arts Course, he enrolled himself as a student of Divinity in the Theological College of the Free Church of Scotland, the denomination to which his parents belonged. Like many other Scottish youths, he had entered the University with the intention of becoming a minister of the Church ; and although his philosophical and other studies had inevitably modified in important respects the theological beliefs with which he started, he still believed that he could find liberty of utterance within the Church in which he had been brought up for what he regarded as the essentials of religious faith. The omens at the moment were not exactly favourable ; for



in that very year the supreme ecclesiastical court of the Free Church had removed Robertson Smith from his professoriate on account of his views on the data and authorship of the Pentateuch and other books of the Old Testament. But this marked in reality the turn of the tide, and in the course of a few years other teachers and ministers of the Free Church taught with impunity the critical conclusions which had cost Smith his Chair. Seth felt, as he expressed it at the time, that there was "a very decided party in the Free Church who cultivated a spirit of charity and toleration, and these must in the nature of things gain the day—which is worth struggling for." The four years he spent at New College proved a fruitful time in his mental development. He made many friendships, and in A. B. Davidson, the Professor of Hebrew and Old Testament Exegesis, he found, like so many others, an ideal teacher in whom the finest scholarship and the sense of literature and history were happily combined with spiritual insight and deep religious feeling. Under Davidson's guidance his students became familiar with the best results of modern criticism, and the Bible as he opened it up to them became to them a new book. They assimilated almost unconsciously a new conception of what revelation and inspiration might mean in the history of a nation or of mankind. In after years Seth always spoke with reverence and affection of Davidson's teaching as one of the formative influences in his life.

After duly completing his theological course, Seth was licensed by the Free Church Presbytery of Edinburgh, and preached from time to time with acceptance in various parts of Scotland, but he was to find his true vocation along other lines. His theological studies had not damped his original interest in philosophy; the two disciplines, as he regarded them, dealt in their

highest ranges with the same subject. Moreover, during the period of his New College course, he had spent two summer semesters at German Universities, and had also held for two years (1883-85) the post of assistant to his old teacher, Professor Campbell Fraser. He had thus had practical experience in the University teaching of philosophy. As assistant, besides reading and estimating the examination papers and essays, it was his duty to deliver supplementary lectures in Logic to a large class, and to give independent lectures on Ancient Philosophy and on Kant to the advanced students. Beginning this work with a little trepidation, he displayed at once a natural aptitude for it. The large Pass classes in a Scottish University were apt to be noisy during lectures and to take advantage of any weakness on the part of their teachers; but from the first Seth, young as he was, had not the slightest difficulty in keeping order. He also found that he could speak easily from notes; what he gave the students was lucid, fresh, and well arranged, and was appreciated by them accordingly. He himself was interested in his work, especially that with the senior students, with whom he came into more personal contact. He found, in short, that not only could he do the work, but that the work was work worth doing, when well done. Accordingly when an invitation came to him unexpectedly in 1886 to succeed Dr J. G. Schurman as Professor of Metaphysics and Ethics in Dalhousie College, Halifax, Nova Scotia, he had little difficulty in making up his mind to accept the career thus indicated. Dr Schurman, a distinguished Canadian, afterwards President of Cornell University and now Ambassador of the United States to Germany, had been a friend of the family since his student days in Europe, and so his account of conditions in Halifax could be relied on. The report

of Dalhousie College, its standards of teaching, its staff and its students, were sufficiently in line with Seth's Edinburgh experience to make the prospect of working there attractive. It was a wrench, of course, to leave his native country, but it was not necessarily for ever; and he sailed in good heart in the autumn of that year to take up his new duties. He was twenty-six years of age, and the next twelve years were to be spent on the other side of the Atlantic.

Six of these were passed in Halifax, and Seth always retained a warm feeling for the town with its beautiful surroundings and the college where he began his professorial teaching. He valued his Canadian experience, and it was a pleasure to him in later years to act as honorary President of the Canadian Club, founded by students from Canada, in Edinburgh University. When he attended the centenary of Dalhousie College in 1919, receiving on the occasion the honorary degree of the University, he drew an interesting comparison between the Halifax of the 'eighties, as it first impressed him, and the city as he found it after some twenty years of political and commercial development.<sup>1</sup>

Of his teaching work he wrote to a friend after three months' experience: "With the College and my work I am very much pleased. The great beauty about it is that one is entirely independent in one's own subject. That is the greatest comfort possible. I have small classes: eleven in Metaphysics, eleven in Ethics, and five in Honours Metaphysics. I find the work very interesting. One is able to make the most of it, and to know the students individually. Also it is possible to have discussions and conversations, and I find the students very ready to join in them—much more so than our Scottish students." In Ethics—which he now

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix C, 'Halifax Revisited.'

began to teach for the first time—he confessed that he found some difficulty in breaking ground, and he began by using Calderwood's 'Handbook' as a text-book. "We have some lively discussions over the old problems, which remind me of the Moral Philosophy classroom at Edinburgh. . . . I could not think of coming out with a course of lectures on Ethics just yet, but I shall feel my way thus." By the end of his second session we find him writing that he has "got much interested in Ethics in lecturing on it this winter"; and he worked up some of his material into an article for 'Mind' on "The Evolution of Morality." It was largely devoted to a criticism of what was then known as "the ethics of evolution"; and Leslie Stephen, one of the writers criticised, wrote at the time to thank him for it, and to express his sense of "the ability of the article, as well as of its candour and courtesy." He followed this up by a more important piece of work, "Freedom as Ethical Postulate," independently published in 1891; and Ethics became in these years more and more the topic to which his thoughts returned. He was already contemplating a more comprehensive treatment of the subject as a whole. "I am always *thinking* about Ethics," he wrote in the autumn of 1891, "but I have a good deal to do for my other courses. Still I shall, from now on, be able to concentrate again on Ethics and *write* on that. I am always noting down stray ideas." A few months later he is able to report: "I am making substantial progress with my book. The plan of it is now pretty clearly defined." And the plan he proceeds to sketch is substantially that which he carried to completion in his 'Study of Ethical Principles.'

The strong natural bent of his mind had been a good deal hampered, however, by the multifarious duties which devolved upon him at Dalhousie. Dr Lyall, his aged

colleague in the philosophical department, was laid aside by illness in 1888 ; and when he died in the early days of 1890, his Chair was not filled up. The whole burden of the department thus fell upon Seth, who became responsible for the classes of Logic and Psychology, as well as the subjects of his own Chair. He threw himself conscientiously into the work—going, for example, to Berlin for a summer semester, specially to study experimental and physiological psychology with Ebbinghaus.<sup>1</sup> But he found the combined duties more than one man could satisfactorily undertake. Psychology in particular, which was then rapidly developing into an independent science, demanded, he felt, mental aptitudes and a special training which he did not possess. An invitation, therefore, which he received in 1892 to join the philosophical staff of Brown University, where Psychology, under Professor Delabarre, was in the hands of a competent specialist, came to him with a sense of relief. The title of the Chair to which he was called—he was to be “Professor of Natural Theology” —caused him at first some little hesitation ; but when interpreted as Philosophy of Religion, to be treated in entire freedom from dogmatic limitations, he found the subject eminently attractive, and one, moreover, for which his previous training seemed a natural preparation. The special course of lectures which he had to give caused him no difficulty. As he wrote at the time, he found the reading that it involved “indirectly helpful for [his] book, and in itself it is fascinating.” In practice this part of his teaching at Brown was combined with lectures on Ethics and Metaphysics. His title was, in

<sup>1</sup> Ebbinghaus, however, was doing a minimum of university work that summer, and Seth appears to have turned in the circumstances to Pfleiderer's lectures on the Philosophy of Religion, and Harnack's on the History of Dogma, subjects which he doubtless felt to be more congenial.

fact, altered in 1894 to Professor of Philosophy and Elton Professor of Natural Theology, to be in accordance with the facts of the case.

Rhode Island has a definite place in the history of English philosophy through Berkeley's three years' residence there; and Brown University, founded in 1764, was one of the oldest of American universities, and at the same time one of the most progressive. Providence was a pleasant city, on a larger scale than Halifax; and its situation, not far from Boston on the one side and New York on the other, naturally brought Seth more into the main stream of intellectual life on the American continent, and gave him opportunities of meeting philosophical colleagues from other universities. It was something of a wrench to him, as a patriotic Briton, to exchange the Union Jack for the Stars and Stripes, and he missed the five months' summer vacation in which Halifax followed the old Scottish tradition. These vacations had made it easy for him to spend months at a time in Scotland when so inclined, or to include in his year a summer's work in Germany, like that mentioned above. The academic year in the American universities was considerably longer. But the four years spent at Brown (1892-96) were a time of happy and fruitful activity. He put himself at once on the best terms with the students, and his success as a teacher was marked. Among his colleagues and other members of the community he made warm and enduring friendships. In the last year of his life he was in correspondence with the President of Brown University, who was anxious to renew the old connection by conferring upon him its honorary degree, and had invited him to deliver a lecture, or, if possible, a short course of lectures, when he came to receive it. And this he had planned to do in the first year of his leisure.

These years at Brown saw also the publication of his 'Study of Ethical Principles' and the foundation of his wider reputation. The proof-reading was done in Scotland in the summer of 1894, and the book was published in the autumn. It found its public immediately, a second edition being called for within a few months. A third revised edition appeared in 1897, with a new chapter on "Moral Progress"; and certain changes were introduced from time to time in successive editions—changes of emphasis for the most part—as a result of the author's continuous reflection on the subject-matter. But in all the essentials of its standpoint and method, the book, now in its sixteenth edition, has remained substantially the same. The qualities in virtue of which it has appealed to so wide a public, are, primarily, the clear arrangement of topics, the breadth of the handling, and the lucidity and grace of the style, and, more particularly, the skill with which the history of the subject, especially that of Greek Ethics, is woven into the doctrinal exposition, and the happy use of illustrations from literature. The book may be said to be soaked in literature and history; and although a philosophical treatise, it possesses also in a measure the unity of an artistic whole, in which the writer's personality—his whole attitude to the world and human life—finds expression. Although it may be used as a textbook—has indeed been widely so used—it makes in reality an intimate personal appeal, more especially felt, perhaps, in Part II., where the author handles with sure insight the concrete problems of the moral life, and in the high seriousness and candour with which he discusses, in Part III., the metaphysical implications of his ethical doctrine. The book, in short, is a living book, because the writer has put so much of himself into it.

In 1896 Seth was offered and accepted the Sage

Professorship of Moral Philosophy in Cornell University, to be combined with the co-editorship of the 'Philosophical Review.' As holder of this Chair in one of the largest and best-equipped of American universities, his footing on that continent was henceforth secure. But he had little more than begun his second session when the death of his old teacher, Calderwood, threw open the Edinburgh Chair; and in view of the strong offers of support which he received from Scotland, the temptation to become a candidate was irresistible. In spite of the many friendships he had made in Canada and the United States, and the success with which he had adapted himself to American ways, there was at the bottom of his heart an inextinguishable yearning to return to his native land. He had on more than one occasion submitted his name for philosophical posts in Scotland, but the present proved to be his true opportunity. He was now well known, both as a writer and as a conspicuously successful teacher; and in May 1898 he had the supreme satisfaction of being elected Professor of Moral Philosophy in his old university. He entered on his duties in October of the same year. His Inaugural Lecture was appropriately on "The Scottish Contributions to Moral Philosophy," a discriminative estimate of the ethical views of Hutcheson, Hume, and Reid.

When he settled in Edinburgh he took up house with his mother, to whom he was deeply attached, and to whom he had inscribed his book. Left a widow in 1885, she had followed him to Halifax with her three youngest children, and made a home for him there for two years; and his return in honour to his native city gave her keen satisfaction. She was a woman of remarkable force of character, in whom depth of feeling was happily mated with a lively sense of humour, and till



her death in 1911, at the age of eighty, she presided over her son's household and entertained his guests. Her youngest son, a bachelor like the professor, shared the home, which became a centre of hospitality to successive generations of students, as well as to a large circle of friends and frequent visitors from overseas.

The twenty-six years of Seth's tenure of the Edinburgh Chair were, in a sense, like those eras of which it is said, happy is the nation that has no history. There is little outstanding to relate, but year by year he strengthened his hold upon his students, and built up his reputation as a great teacher. That reputation was well deserved, for he spared himself no pains. He lived in his work, which from the nature of the method he followed was lived through afresh every year. He was continually varying and endeavouring to perfect his exposition. The time he gave to personal intercourse with his students was quite unusual, and his interest in them did not cease when they left the university. He would take an almost incredible amount of trouble to help an old student to secure a suitable appointment, and when vacancies arose he always seemed to have some deserving candidate in view. This absorption in the actual work of teaching naturally restricted his literary production. He published only one other volume, 'English Philosophers and Schools of Philosophy,' which appeared in 1912 in a series called "The Channels of English Literature." Historical in character and including all the important philosophical writers of three centuries, it entailed, according to the author's standards of scholarship, a laborious and extended course of reading, not always germane to the writer's central interest. The result is a very fine piece of workmanship, a survey admirably balanced, carefully documented, and delightfully written. But one is sometimes tempted to

regret, especially in view of his too early death, that the time and labour spent upon it had not been devoted to working out his own views on the social applications of Ethics and the function of the State, the subject which in these later years increasingly occupied his thoughts.

He had strongly emphasised in his 'Study of Ethical Principles' the meaning of the State as an ethical institution, and the duties of citizenship as incumbent on the individual; and accordingly when he resumed the active exercise of his British citizenship, he instinctively proceeded to translate theory into practice in his own case, taking his full share in the life of the community and the wise direction of that life towards its own betterment. In the early years of the century he gave his active support to the Scottish Temperance Legislation Board—the Peel Board, as it was called—whose policy was to combat the evils of the drink traffic by a system of disinterested management, based upon the Samlag system, which had been operative in Norway since 1871. He was one of four Scottish citizens who went to Norway, on the invitation of the Board, to study the Norwegian Liquor Licensing Laws and their results. On their return the four commissioners published a detailed report, and Seth himself wrote an article on the subject for the 'Contemporary Review.' A little later he became keenly interested in the Minority Report of the Poor Law Commission of 1909, and was a member of the Scottish National Committee to promote the break-up of the Poor Law. When Mr and Mrs Sidney Webb addressed meetings all over Scotland in support of the minority proposals, he was one of their Chairmen, and wrote also in 'The Crusade,' the organ of the National Committee for the Prevention of Destitution.

Amid the cruel anxieties of the War, he did not forget

the acuteness of the social problems which would confront us at its close. It seemed to him of the utmost importance that we should possess a body of trained social workers to fill the various posts which the awakened conscience of the community was creating for the discharge of duties which it now realised to be incumbent upon it. Schools of training for such social work had already been established in two or three university centres, and early in 1917 Seth set about the foundation of a School of Social Study and Training in Edinburgh in connection with the University. A voluntary association had to be formed, and subscriptions collected to finance the scheme. The interest of the University authorities and the support of the educational and other public bodies in Edinburgh had to be secured. Into this preliminary work, as well as into the work of drafting the constitution of the Association and arranging the scheme of instruction, he threw himself with great energy, and the school was opened by the Secretary for Scotland and began its active work in the first days of 1918. In a contribution to the 'Scotsman' at the time, after enumerating the classes of people whom the school was intended to serve, he thus outlined the aims of its promoters :—

“Not the least important of the lessons which such a course of social study and training is calculated to teach is that of the deeper and more adequate interpretation of social work which is necessary if the work is to be efficiently performed. It is not so long ago that the ideal of the organisation of charitable relief seemed to many of the most enlightened to be the last word on the subject. As an ideal of social work, ‘charity organisation’ is already obsolete. It has been superseded by the new ideal of the prevention of poverty and the other social evils which call for such relief ; and the community is beginning to realise its responsibility for

social welfare through the use of such means as the care of infant and child life, the after-care of school children, the continuation of their education after school age, the better housing of the people, the improvement of industrial organisation, insurance against sickness, old age, and unemployment. The great aim of the new schools of social study and training is, by opening the mind of the student to the inter-connections of the several social problems and the subtle action and reaction of causes and effects, to develop in him a scientific understanding of social facts. For we cannot doubt that, here as elsewhere, knowledge is power."

During the years that followed he worked hard for the School in the dual capacity of Chairman of the Executive and Honorary Treasurer, delivering also in the early sessions several special courses of lectures. The burden was perhaps heavier than his strength justified him in undertaking, but the School owed much to his wise guidance. He was no party politician and belonged to no party organisation, but his study of social and economic history had deeply impressed upon him the duties of Society to the more helpless of its members. These duties were in his eyes a fundamental part of moral obligation, and, as time went on, the problems of social ethics took a more and more prominent place in his class lectures and discussions.

His life was happy, brightened by many interests. In Landor's words, he might have said, "Nature I loved, and next to nature Art." He had read widely outside the range of his professional work, especially poetry, memoirs, and fiction. His tastes were catholic, but he was continually returning to his favourite poets and novelists. He was re-reading the Waverley novels one after another, for the last of many times, during the weeks of his last illness. He was fond of good acting and good music, especially in his later years of chamber

music. Travel was at all times a joy to him. There were few districts in England or Scotland which he had not explored at leisure, and he had visited many parts of Continental Europe, often making the tour with some congenial companion. Germany and Switzerland were familiar to him from his early visits in the 'eighties. He was several times in Norway, on one occasion as far as the North Cape ; and his last long holiday, the year before his death, was devoted to Naples and its surroundings, and the Greek cities and temples of Sicily. Northern Italy and Rome he had done pretty thoroughly some years before, and he saw something of the Greek mainland and islands as a member of the Archæological Association, which met in Athens in 1905. He visited the site of Troy on that occasion, and went as far afield as Constantinople, returning through Central Europe. He enjoyed the social side of such a gathering, and some years later he joined an excursion of the Franco-Scottish Society to Bordeaux, contributing himself to the gaiety of nations by a humorous paper—"A Scottish Philosopher in France"—in which he recalled Hume's account of his enthusiastic reception by the Parisians in 1753. Although not notably robust in appearance, his health gave him throughout no serious concern. Once only he was threatened with serious eye trouble, and for about half a year he had to resort to dictation and submit to be read to ; but the mischief yielded to treatment, and he was able to use his eyes freely to the end of his life. Above all, he had the great happiness of congenial work from first to last, and his life was rich in friendship. His friendships were not limited to his contemporaries or the grown-ups of later generations. He had a peculiarly tender and engaging way with quite young children, and he won the hearts of those who were older by his gay and affectionate chaff.

The winter of 1923-4 found him as fully engrossed in his university work and his various interests as ever, and to all appearance in as good physical condition as ever to face his duties. He carried through the work of the autumn and spring terms as usual, but at the close of the second term in March he seemed more than usually tired. Instead of going off for a holiday at once, as he commonly did, he lingered over some examination papers and other work which he wanted to finish ; and when he did start for a short holiday in the south-west of England, he returned sooner than he had originally intended. He had apparently derived no benefit from the change, and when the university resumed work at the beginning of May, he was almost immediately laid aside by what was taken at first to be nothing worse than a chill. Medical diagnosis, however, revealed an alarming degree of heart weakness, a state of things of which he had had no previous warning. After a critical week, absolute rest and the appropriate remedies began to produce their effect ; a steady improvement was visible, and the doctors assured his friends that with reasonable care he would find himself restored by the autumn to a fairly normal state of health, which would even admit of his resuming his university work if he so desired. In point of fact, the improvement continued, and by the middle of June he was able to be removed to the country and to enjoy short walks and motor runs. Meanwhile he had resigned his Chair. Some time before, and quite apart from any considerations of health, he had resolved to retire in the autumn of 1925, when he would have completed his sixty-fifth year ; but since his sudden illness it was clear to him that he ought not to think of attempting another session's work, with the risk of another breakdown, and he was characteristically anxious that the university arrangements should

not suffer in any way through hesitation on his part. He proposed to devote the remainder of the summer to recruiting his strength, but hoped in the autumn to return to his books, and, in the leisure ensured by his retirement, collect some of his scattered papers, completing them by others freshly written, in a volume which should be a mature statement of his thought on subjects which had formed the matter of his teaching for close on forty years. It was not to be. Towards the end of July he returned to Edinburgh for a few days, preparatory to a more extended stay in another part of Scotland. On the afternoon of 24th July, while he was paying some farewell calls, in a moment he passed away. The news of his death, following so closely upon reports of his restoration to comparative health, intensified the feeling of loss, and called forth in both hemispheres remarkable tributes to his influence as a teacher and the charm of his personality. A few extracts from some of the more notable may fitly find a place here :—

“By the death of Professor Seth,” wrote the author of the obituary notice in ‘The Times,’ “Edinburgh University loses not merely a man of high philosophic competence but a great atmosphere. . . . Among the many professors in the Scottish universities in the last forty years the number that have exercised the extraordinary persuasive charm exercised by Professor Seth, both in his classes and among the general public of Scotland, is very small. He was, it might quite well be said, a man in a million, firm in his own opinions, enlightened in his views, gentle, conciliatory, fair-minded, and catholic—all these adjectives could be applied to him with precision. At his house those interested in general philosophy or in the study of ethics were sure to meet

from time to time men of first-class quality from many parts of the world, particularly from the United States and from Canada. Possibly his experience in America taught him to look on the practical side of philosophy as equally important with the theoretic. It is certain that on his return to Edinburgh he kept touch with the world of affairs in a way that only one professor now and again is able to do."

In an appreciation contributed to the 'Scotsman,' his colleague, Professor Norman Kemp Smith, wrote: "Professor James Seth's sudden death, when he was believed to have passed the dangerous stage in his recent illness and to be well on the way to complete recovery, will bring home to his hosts of friends in the city and university and throughout the country how large a part he occupied in the general life, and how irreparable is the loss which they suffer in his departure from their midst. His simplicity and kindness of nature, his geniality and whimsical humour, made him the friend alike of young and old, of students and colleagues. Few can have had a wider or more varied circle of friends. A bachelor, he kept house with his brother, Mr John W. L. Seth, and their home has been a centre of abounding hospitality. Professor Seth regarded as one of the highest privileges of his office the opportunities which it afforded of getting into touch, year by year, with yet another section of the younger generation; and contact, once established, was kept fresh and alive by kindly services on the one hand and by reverent and affectionate esteem on the other. The increasing disparity of age, which so often creates barriers, was in his case effectually bridged by the youthfulness of spirit which he retained to the last.

"No less marked features in Professor Seth were his strength of character and tenacity of purpose. First



and foremost among the duties, with which he allowed nothing to interfere, was his work as a teacher. He spent himself on behalf of the students entrusted to his care with enthusiasm and unflagging devotion, his natural aptitude for teaching being strengthened and inspired by his appreciation of the great opportunities afforded by a subject that concerns itself more vitally than any other in the Arts curriculum with all that is deepest in life and character. And he was richly rewarded by the affection and esteem of the multitude of students who passed through his classroom in the twenty-six years of his service. A chief feature of his teaching (seldom attempted in classes so large in size) was the prominence which he gave to discussion, as a means of securing community of understanding. Neither the individual nor the social side of Ethics was neglected, the summer term in all the later years being devoted to the problems of the State. And in his own person he lived what he thus taught, giving public service as opportunity offered. Only two of his well-known services to the community need be here mentioned—his advocacy of the Minority Report of the Poor Law Commission in 1909, and more recently his organisation of the School of Social Study and Training, which, under the auspices of the university, has become one of the leading schools in Great Britain for the training of social workers.”

Professor John Muirhead, in an intimate appreciation in ‘Nature,’ wrote: “During his twenty-six years’ tenure of the Chair of Moral Philosophy, Seth made a place for himself in the life of the university and the city that would bear comparison with the most distinguished in the long line of his predecessors. . . . Endowed with great readiness of speech and a singular power of entering into the minds of his students, he was able, in spite of the size of his classes, to perfect

a form of catechetical instruction which was the delight of his students, and made 'Professor Jim' for a quarter of a century one of the most popular teachers in Scotland.

"On the other hand, related by his subject of moral (which, on his interpretation of it, meant also political) philosophy to the civic life of the community, Seth took the warmest practical interest in all advanced movements. He held that 'it is for the State to emancipate from the slavery of social conditions the toiling masses of society, to endow those who are citizens only in name with a real ethical citizenship—the franchise of a complete and worthy human life,' in a word, 'to co-ordinate the industrial with the ethical life.' It was in such a 'regulative socialism' that he found the *via media* between individualistic and communistic extremes. In the same spirit he interested himself in the Settlement and kindred movements, and took a leading part in the establishment of a course of study in social science with the view of linking these more closely with the university. His wide connection with America and the Continent and his generous hospitality made the bachelor home, which he shared with his younger brother John, a rendezvous of scholars from all parts of the world, as well as of his more intimate friends in Britain. It was altogether in harmony with the genius for friendship that was so marked a feature of his character that he died in the course of a round of calls upon acquaintances who were themselves in trouble. *Sic vivamus ut sic moriamur.*"

Professor Walter G. Everett, his old colleague in Brown University, wrote in the 'Philosophical Review' of "the hundreds of his students who, even after the lapse of many years, recall with grateful memory his gracious personality and his persuasive initiation into the larger problems of human thought," and of his "con-

tributions to philosophical literature, all of which bear the stamp of careful scholarship, sensitive appreciation of values, and unusual clearness and felicity of expression." "Those who have followed the career of Professor Seth in later years," he concludes, "are aware that his interest was not limited to his philosophical work, devotedly as he pursued this to the end. His active sympathy led him to enlist in many public and social causes, especially those which had for their aim the alleviation of the lot of the unfortunate and dispossessed. He will be remembered in Edinburgh by many to whom philosophy is a thing remote and unknown, but to whom the philosopher was the living embodiment of goodwill and human brotherhood. To those who knew James Seth our common earthly ways, sordid and ignoble as they often appear, will remain invested with something of added meaning and beauty, because he trod them with such gentleness and courage, such generosity and wisdom."

Reference should also be made, though it hardly lends itself to quotation, to a charming article in a lighter vein, "Memories of James Seth," contributed to the 'Dalhousie Review,' by Professor Archibald Mac-Mechan, an old colleague of his Halifax days.

The present President of Dalhousie University, whose memories also reach back to that time, wrote in a private letter :—

"You probably may not appreciate fully how deep was the regard in which Professor Seth was held in Halifax, not merely by the university people and his old students, but also by the prominent citizens with whom he mingled during his stay here. It is hard to determine which were admired most, his intellectual qualities and power of expression or the sweetness and beauty of his character. I recall vividly the acclaim

with which he was received in Convocation when I had the honour of admitting him to the Honorary LL.D. degree, and again, when, at the dinner to those new honorary graduates, he made a most beautiful and feeling address. The audience found in him their ideal of the College teacher and scholar and man. Dalhousie has always been very proud of the fact that he was so closely identified with her in his early teaching, and that she was able to have him hold her in fond recollection."

A short notice in 'The Student,' the organ of the undergraduates of Edinburgh University, expressed the affectionate regard in which he was held through so many years by his pupils: "Although interested in many activities, it is chiefly as a teacher that Professor Seth would have wished to be remembered, and in the art of teaching he excelled. He abhorred the slavish and mechanical transcription, absorption, and reproduction of lecture-notes, and forbade his students to put on paper more than a skeleton of the argument. For the rest he talked, discussed, questioned, argued the pro and the con before the class, any member of which was permitted, indeed encouraged, to break in with questions, objections, or counter-arguments. So the class became a feast for the mind, never a mere weariness to the wrist. He held nothing proved unless the minds—and not the notebooks only—of his students accompanied him. Although so fine a teacher, or perhaps because of it, he was always on the outlook for any new truth that his students could teach him.

"He was a man of great modesty and charm of character. Somewhat shy and retiring himself, he was yet extremely hospitable, and loved to gather round him a circle of friends who would find pleasure in each other's talk and company. There are men whom we like, others whom we admire, but of James Seth one can only say

that he was loved by all. He was unfailingly patient and kind and generous, and many of his students have reason to remember with gratitude the time when they asked him for help and advice. By his kindliness, sympathy, quiet humour, and even by his mannerisms and foibles he endeared himself to all. He loved his work, none better, and he knew how to speak with enthusiasm and ardour of the quest of goodness and the good life; and this 'he taughte, but first he folwed it himselve.' "

## ESSAYS AND ADDRESSES



## THE PRACTICAL INTEREST OF ETHICS, CASUISTICAL AND SOCIAL<sup>1</sup>

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AS it is my purpose in these lectures to consider the social and political application of ethical principles, it may be useful to discuss at the outset the general question of the possibility or legitimacy of such an application of these principles ; to ask whether, and in what sense, Ethics has a practical interest and application. Now there are two possible senses of such a practical interest and application : (1) the casuistical and individual sense, according to which Ethics is supposed to provide not merely general principles of conduct but rules for the guidance of the individual conscience, telling the individual not merely why certain actions or classes of actions are right or wrong but what particular actions are right and wrong for him in his present circumstances. This is the Mediæval or Scholastic view, and it seems to me, on the whole, unwarranted. (2) The non-casuistical but social and political application of ethical principles, according to which Ethics, while a science rather than an art so far

<sup>1</sup> The first of a short series of lectures at Manchester College, Oxford, in 1905.



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as the individual life is concerned—a science which leaves the guidance of the individual life in the hands of the individual conscience—finds its chief, if not its sole, practical application in the sphere of social and political conduct, discovering the principles of social justice and guiding the legislator and statesman in the application of these principles, and thus securing the true—which is always the ethical—well-being of society. This is the view of the great moralists both of the ancient and of the modern period, of Plato and Aristotle, of the Utilitarians and Idealists alike. I propose in the present lecture to try to bring out the superiority of the latter to the former interpretation of the practical interest and value of ethical principles, by tracing, as briefly as I can, the development of these two views in the history of ethical thought, in the hope that by seeing how the great moralists have conceived their task we may reach a satisfactory conclusion for ourselves.

The Socratic effort to systematise the moral judgments of his contemporaries was inspired as much by a practical as by an intellectual purpose. That purpose was to find a way of escape from the scepticism regarding the basis of moral distinctions which he discovered to be implicit in the teaching of the Sophists, to substitute for their superficial, conventional, and “unprincipled” virtue a deeper and more stable morality founded upon an understanding of its rational basis and therefore its universal validity. The result was, it is true, rather negative than positive; the disciples of Socrates attained a knowledge of their ignorance rather than a knowledge of the nature of moral distinctions, or a discovery of their roots in some ultimate Good. Yet there can be no doubt that it was with a view to the better ordering of practice that the entire inquiry into the theory of virtue and the Good was undertaken, and

that it was only because Socrates regarded theoretic truth, or consistency of moral judgment, as the pre-supposition of virtue or consistency of moral practice, that he refused to advance from principles to their application so long as any doubt remained as to the validity of these principles themselves.

We appreciate the full practical significance of the Socratic inquiry only when we realise how absolute and unfailing was the parallelism for him between knowledge and virtue, between intellectual insight and practical achievement. It was because he believed that the degree of our virtue corresponded precisely in every case with the degree of our knowledge, and that vice was always reducible to ignorance or confusion of thought, that he conceived his first and last duty as a moral teacher to be the correction of error or inconsistency in moral judgment, or the attainment of a Logic of Virtue. Until men thought consistently or truly, they could not possibly act consistently or virtuously ; just in the measure in which they thought consistently, their action could not fail to be also rational or virtuous. Socrates was, therefore, no less, but far more, truly a teacher of Virtue, a moral guide, than the Sophists. Their boasted "art of virtue" was in reality no art at all, because it was not founded on a theory of virtue or the Good ; the only true guide or moral teacher is he who has first theorised virtue, or reduced it to its principles. Here as everywhere the art is simply the application of theoretic or scientific principles. It is a fatal misunderstanding of the aim and spirit of the Socratic Dialectic which sees in it only, or even primarily, the satisfaction of a merely intellectual interest, of a passion for logical distinctions which simply uses moral judgments and concepts as the material which comes most readily to its hand. Socrates's own consuming interest is in morality for its

own sake ; for him conduct is the supreme thing in life. He is inspired with a passion for righteousness, and he is in his own Greek way a teacher of righteousness, a guide who stands ready at his divinely appointed post to point his fellows towards the true goal of human life.

Plato distinguishes, as Socrates had not done, between ordinary or unreflective and philosophic or reflective virtue. The virtue of the ordinary man and good citizen is not the product of knowledge, but of custom and convention. But if this ordinary virtue is to be established on firm and true foundations, it must be guided by the insight of the philosopher. The virtuous habits of the ordinary citizen, in so far as they are truly virtuous, presuppose the higher virtue of the statesman which results from his knowledge of the Good of the State. Nor is this knowledge the merely practical knowledge of Socrates ; it is that metaphysical knowledge of ultimate reality which to Socrates had seemed unattainable by man. Statesmanship is not a special technique ; it is not one of the arts. It is *the* art of life, the supreme application of absolute knowledge. Nor is this knowledge merely the presupposition of virtue, whether the undeveloped virtue of the ordinary citizen or the developed virtue of the statesman and philosopher ; it is itself the highest form of virtue. The true life of a man as a rational being is not the life of action but the life of thought. Whether for the mass of mankind or for the philosophic few, therefore, knowledge has supreme practical significance ; for the former indirectly and vicariously, as it were, for the latter directly both as statesmen and as men. The philosopher is the true statesman, the saviour of the State ; it is his knowledge of absolute reality that can alone guide the practical activity of the many who are incapable of the higher life, as they grope among the

shadows of their shadowy world. While Socrates had sought to awaken the individual to the true significance of his conduct, and identified the good man with the scientific moralist, Plato seeks the reformation of the individual through that of the State, holding that, although a man may be good without being able to theorise his virtue, and the mass of mankind must be content with such unreflective and undeveloped goodness, this civic virtue implies the good State, which in turn implies the true statesman, the man who is not merely a moralist but a philosopher, who knows the Good of the State because he knows the Good itself.

Aristotle is no less profoundly interested in the political problem than Plato, and if for him the two inquiries are distinct, they are yet organic the one to the other. Ethics is "a kind of political inquiry," the presupposition of the political inquiry proper. Its function is to determine the lines on which the statesman is to proceed in constituting the State and legislating for it. We can only hope to arrive at the true Laws—the laws by enforcing the habit of obedience to which the statesman will educate the individual citizen in virtue—by first investigating the nature of the Good at which the statesman is to aim in the organisation of the State and its education. The scientific moralist is, like Socrates, the teacher of the statesman, who in turn is the teacher of the ordinary citizen. Hence the intensely practical interest of ethical inquiry. "In practical matters the completion or end is not speculation and the knowledge of a given class of objects but action, so that it is not enough to know about goodness, but we must also endeavour to possess it and make use of it, and to do anything else that may be necessary to make us good."<sup>1</sup> "And surely from a practical point of

<sup>1</sup> 'Nic. Eth.,' X, 9 (1-2).

view it much concerns us to know this good ; for then, like archers shooting at a definite mark, we shall be more likely to attain what we want.”<sup>1</sup>

Yet Aristotle does not seem to look to Ethics for concrete and detailed guidance in the conduct of the individual life. The guidance it is capable of affording is general, not particular, and is calculated therefore to be useful to the statesman rather than to the private individual. For such concrete practical guidance he points the individual to the *φρόνιμος* rather than to the *σοφός*, to the wisdom of experience, the practical tact or trained intuition which a long course of virtuous activity alone can produce, rather than to that scientific understanding of morality which is the product of persistent reflection upon its nature. The moral life develops in the individual not merely certain habits of action, but certain habits of thought ; and the moral decisions thus reached are final even for Ethics, whose starting-point or data they form. Of every virtuous action we can predicate a certain general character : it is a case of the habitual choice of the Mean, a case of action according to right reason. But what specifically and in its concrete details the virtuous action is, the *φρόνιμος* alone can determine.

The outcome of the ethical thought of the great Socratic period of Greek speculation thus seems to be that the interest of ethical reflection, though intensely practical, is not casuistical. Socrates's own view that the attainment of virtue by the individual implies the exchange by him of conventional for reflective virtue, that insight into the true significance of his conduct is the presupposition of individual virtue, is abandoned by his successors, Plato and Aristotle, for the view that the statesman alone needs such scientific knowledge of

<sup>1</sup> ‘*Nic. Eth.*, I, 2 (2).

virtue and the Good, and that the virtue of the ordinary man must either remain merely conventional or be guided by that moral tact or intuitive knowledge of virtue which is the result of virtuous conduct rather than of scientific reflection, and which is authoritative, not only for the individual in the conduct of his own life but also for the moralist himself. The practical interest of ethical science is social and political rather than individual; it gives us the clue to the true constitution of the State. The legislator and statesman must be a moralist if the individual citizen is to rest securely in the practice of conventional or untheorised virtue. The function of Ethics (or rather of Politics) is not so to enlighten the individual conscience as to substitute the guidance of theoretic insight for that of convention and opinion, but to secure that the opinion and convention which guide the conduct of the ordinary citizen shall be that true opinion and convention whose warrant is to be found in nature and in reason, and thus to secure that the resulting conduct shall be truly, though uncritically, virtuous. Ethics and Politics are one and the same inquiry; its entire aim and purpose is the reformation, or, it may be, the revolution of the State, the discovery, in order to the realisation, of the true State. The good man is the good citizen—that is, the citizen of the good State. But while the goodness of the State, as realised in the statesman, is impossible without philosophic reflection, that of the mere citizen is characteristically unreflective. And if we take Socrates at his own word, and limit his vocation to the education of statesmen, we find a remarkable consensus of opinion in the greater moralists of Greece that Ethics is “a kind of political inquiry,” and that its guidance of individual conduct is indirect rather than direct, since the knowledge of

the Good which it achieves for itself is the source of that right opinion and those rationally-warranted conventions in unquestioning obedience to which ordinary civic virtue consists. Even the statesman or moralist himself, it is not to be forgotten, guides his own conduct as an individual by the practical wisdom which is the result of action rather than of thought. If, as a statesman, his conduct is guided by conscious insight and scientific understanding, as a man and a citizen he lives the ordinary life of unreflecting virtue and moral intuition.

The problem of the Stoics and Epicureans was notoriously a practical rather than a theoretical problem, and they concerned themselves no less notoriously with the individual rather than with the State. For them the good man is no longer identical with the good citizen. They abandon as insoluble the problem of the reformation of the State. The good man, they hold (making what seems to them an inevitable deduction from the teaching and still more from the life of Socrates), is independent of the good State, and the salvation of the individual is not, like the salvation of the State, an insoluble problem. Its solution is found in escape from the State, which is hopelessly evil, in the substitution of rational insight for obedience to civic conventions. With one voice they proclaim the moral independence of the individual, his right and his obligation as a rational being to guide his conduct by his own rational insight. Virtue is knowledge or wisdom; a merely conventional virtue is no genuine virtue at all. If the individual is to attain the Good, or to live the life of Virtue, he must first apprehend the nature of the Good and the relation of Virtue to it. Either Virtue is itself the Good, or it is the means to a Good beyond itself; but in either case, the Good

is unattainable except by virtuous activity. Even if the Good is not simply goodness itself, the good man alone can attain it.

Yet, however practical, the Ethics of the post-Aristotelian schools are no more casuistical than those of the Socratic schools. Although they address themselves to the individual directly and seek to awaken him to the true significance of his conduct, they do not offer him detailed guidance in that conduct. What they offer their disciples is rather the inspiration of an ideal of conduct than direction in the realisation of that ideal in the details of daily life. They tell them rather why certain actions are right and wrong than what actions are right or wrong. On the whole, they accept and reaffirm the validity of the ordinary virtues, the ordinary duties; they attempt no deduction or derivation of the several virtues or duties from the Good, no important correction of the teachings of the ordinary conscience. They are rather preachers than teachers of righteousness. They are more apt to identify the voice of conscience with the voice of reason and to urge their followers to follow its precepts than to refer them from the precepts of conscience to those of reason or scientific understanding. Hence the inevitable impression of triteness and commonplaceness which the moralisings, especially of the Roman Stoics, produce in the modern reader. Their practical value lies in the re-enforcement of the ordinary morality as, for the ordinary man at any rate, the only path to the moral ideal upon whose obligatoriness and attractiveness they are never tired of insisting. Different, therefore, as they are in their point of view and in their practical purpose from their predecessors, the procedure of these schools does not invalidate our conclusion as to the non-casuistical character of ancient Ethics.



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The original and characteristic element in Mediæval Ethics is the casuistical. So far as the theory of virtue and the Good is concerned, the scholastic moralists are content to superimpose the Christian view upon the Aristotelian. Their real interest in Ethics is practical, and concerns itself with the guidance of the individual conscience. They undertake to decide the "cases" which perplex the ordinary conscience, and thus seek to subject the judgment of the individual, in the practical as in the intellectual sphere, to the authority of the Church. The function of Ethics is not so much to instruct and enlighten the individual conscience, as to supersede it; instead of reasons which make their appeal to the reason of the individual, the casuistic moralist adduces the *ipse dixit* of some doctor of the Church, which it is the duty of the individual to receive in unquestioning faith. Their *Summæ* are text-books for the guidance of the confessor in his dealings with the penitent, and are not intended for the use of the layman himself. The method is essentially un-Aristotelian, external, and juridical; it substitutes rules for principles, a mechanical for a spiritual estimate of morality. It is not essentially or characteristically demoralising, except in so far as it denies the authority of the individual conscience and the autonomy of the moral life. There is always present in it, however, the possibility and the danger of a more serious demoralisation and sophistication of the ordinary conscience, through the relaxation of the rigour of its demands upon the individual; and in the hands of the Jesuits these dangerous possibilities were later realised. In their hands, as Pascal has so impressively shown in the 'Provincial Letters,' Casuistry becomes a method of escaping Duty, by explaining it away; of fulfilling it in the letter while disobeying it in the spirit. They can always find some

authority in favour of the transgressor, some excuse which his own conscience would never sustain. They show a fatal facility in so accommodating the claims of the moral law upon the life of the individual to the weakness of human nature that their "virtue made easy" is as likely as not to be coincident with vice. The casuistical method has never recovered from the disrepute into which it fell through this Jesuitical employment of it.

It was inevitable, therefore, that the method should be abandoned by the moralists of the modern Protestant period. Modern Ethics begins with the effort to find once more a basis for morality in the independent reason of the individual. It is of the essence of Protestantism to reject all external authority, and to affirm the right of the individual to judge for himself in moral as well as in intellectual matters. This trust in the validity of private judgment means, in the practical sphere, a confidence in the deliverances of the ordinary conscience, and the refusal to allow its authority to be superseded by that of the Church or any of its doctors. The function of Ethics is not to settle cases of conscience for the individual, not to instruct the ordinary conscience, or to correct its teachings, but to prove the validity of these teachings by rationalising or systematising them. It is concerned rather with the investigation of the basis of moral laws than with the determination of these laws; if it is concerned with the laws themselves at all, it is rather with principles whose application to particular cases of conduct must be left to the judgment of the individual than with specific rules of conduct. The effort of the early modern moralists, therefore, is to show that the fundamental laws or principles of morality are laws of nature or of reason, whose validity is as absolute as that of reason itself,

## 14 THE PRACTICAL INTEREST OF ETHICS,

not merely arbitrary or conventional rules whose validity is limited by time or place or circumstance.

While the Intuitionist moralists have always contented themselves with the discovery of the ultimate laws of conduct, and have sought rather to *state* than to *prove* their self-evident character, the Utilitarians attempted to make the unconscious Utilitarianism of ordinary morality conscious, and thus to improve that morality, especially on its social and political side. Bentham and Mill were primarily interested, no less than Plato and Aristotle, in the ethical guidance of statesmanship and legislation by social reformers as well as moralists.

Moralists of the Idealistic school have insisted with peculiar emphasis upon the non-casuistical character of ethical science. Its primary and proper function, they contend, is theoretical, not practical. Bradley, for example, in his 'Ethical Studies,' speaks of the view that it is the task of moral philosophy to tell us in particular what is right and wrong as "a strangely erroneous preconception." "All philosophy has to do," he says, "is 'to understand what is,' and moral philosophy has to understand morals which exist, not to make them or give directions for making them. Such a notion is simply ludicrous. . . . The view which thinks moral philosophy is to supply us with particular moral prescriptions confuses science with art, and confuses, besides, reflective with intuitive judgment. That which tells us what in particular is right and wrong is not reflection but intuition."<sup>1</sup> "Cases of collision of duties are not scientific but practical questions. Moral science has nothing whatever to do with the settlement of them; that would belong, did such a thing exist, to the moral art. The difficulties of collisions are not scientific problems; they arise from the complexity of individual cases, and this

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 174-5.

can be dealt with solely by practical insight, not by abstract conceptions and discursive reasoning. . . . The man who can give moral advice is the man of experience, who, from his own knowledge and by sympathy, can transport himself into another's case; who knows the heart and sees through moral illusion; and the man of mere theory is in the practical sphere a useless and dangerous pedant."<sup>1</sup> "We prize the advice of persons who can give us no reasons for what they say. There is a general belief that to try to have reasons for all that you do is sometimes very dangerous. . . . First thoughts are often best, and if once you begin to argue with the devil you are in a perilous state."<sup>2</sup>

And although Green does not put the matter quite so strongly, he is in substantial agreement with Bradley on the question. In the actual crises of conduct, he says, the soul is not "at leisure for philosophical reflection. Its conduct must be determined by influences that act more swiftly and decisively; if in the severe path for which we have supposed the philosopher to be arguing, by an inbred horror of falsehood, which does not wait to give an account of itself, or by sense of the presence of a divine onlooker, whose disapproval, not for fear of penal consequences but for very shame, cannot be faced. . . . It is the action of an ideal of virtue itself, not any theory about the ideal, that can alone be efficient in such a case." Yet he holds that a true philosophy may have an important service to render, "though not in the emergency itself, yet in preparing the soul for it. It will be a service, indeed, rather of the defensive and negative than of the actively inciting kind—a service which in a speculative and dialectical age needs to be rendered, lest the hold of the

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 203-4.

<sup>2</sup> P. 176.

highest moral ideas on the mind should be weakened from apparent lack of intellectual justification.”<sup>1</sup>

On the other hand, it is to be noted that if the Idealistic theory has proved itself to be possessed of no more casuistical value than the Utilitarian, it has shown itself to possess no less practical and social value than the latter theory. The ethics of Hegel himself are penetrated by the ancient Greek spirit of citizenship, and his idealism seems to find in the actual State the very expression and manifestation of the moral ideal itself. In the life of loyal observance of the laws and customs of the politically organised society, rather even than in obedience to the categorical imperatives of the individual conscience, he sees the truly ethical or rational life. His attitude to the State is one of optimistic acquiescence in and satisfaction with the *status quo*, rather than of that discontent with actual institutions and laws which is the stimulus of social and political reform. On the whole, the spirit of Hegel's own ethics is more akin to that of the Conservative than to that of the Reformer; in ethics and in politics he seems forced, by his metaphysical Absolutism, as well as by his sympathies and preconceptions, to the conclusion that “whatever is is right.” The British school, which has derived its inspiration partly from Hegel but partly also from Kant, does not share Hegel's political optimism; for it the moral ideal is essentially a spur to progress beyond the actual attainment. “Green is not slow to point out that the habit of conscientiousness—of moral self-interrogation—is the very mainspring of morality, essential even for preventing the deterioration of moral practice, much more so for the elevation of the existing standard. . . . Hence when he comes to treat of ethics, Green is forced to desert the Hegelian Absolutism, and

<sup>1</sup> ‘Prolegomena to Ethics,’ p. 316.

to insist upon 'an ideal of virtue' as 'the spring from which morality perpetually renews its life.' He philosophises here more in the spirit of Kant and Fichte than of Hegel."<sup>1</sup> It should not surprise us that Green's influence upon Oxford and through Oxford upon a far wider circle was as much moral as intellectual, that the ideal of Self-realisation, as proclaimed by him and other members of the British Idealistic school, has proved a no less inspiring watchword of social and political reform than the ideal of the greatest happiness of the greatest number proved on the lips of the Utilitarians. Let me specify one case of this practical and social influence of the idealistic principle. It was at Oxford and from Green that Arnold Toynbee, like so many other young men of his time, learned the lesson of the supreme claim of the self in every individual to fulfilment and realisation, and the duty the individual owes to his less fortunate fellows to secure for them the opportunity of such a true fulfilment of their human capabilities—the duty more especially which the educated class owes to the uneducated, not merely to improve their material conditions but to share with them those best gifts of human life—of culture and spiritual enjoyments—which come to him in such a place as this. It is chiefly to the inspiration of this moral idealism that we must trace the origin of that movement for the elevation of the masses of our city populations which we have learned to associate with the name of Arnold Toynbee—that University Settlement movement, which is so full of promise, direct and indirect, for the future of society.

Let me briefly sum up the results to which our investigation of the question which I proposed in this lecture seems to have brought us. The main result is, I think, that the practical interest of Ethics is social

<sup>1</sup> 'Hegelianism and Personality,' p. 220.

and political rather than individual or casuistical. This is the common lesson of the procedure of ancient and modern ethics. The mediæval or scholastic ethics alone is casuistical, and it is not to be expected that we should follow the scholastic or mediæval method in ethics any more than in philosophy generally. The business of ethics as a science is scientific theory, not practical application; the discovery of *principles*, not of *rules*. The fact that it is the science of practice does not alter the fact that it is a science, not an art; that its business is to theorise practice, not to guide it. For guidance in practice we must look, not to the scientific moralist, but to the man whose moral experience and attainment have qualified him to judge less erringly than ourselves in questions of conduct, whose goodness has made him wise in these matters. In so far as our own conscience does not answer its own questions, we must take the answer of his conscience. But in any case the answer is that of Conscience or practical insight rather than of theoretic or scientific reflection.

Moral insight, insight into present duty, is the result of faithful fulfilment of duty in the past rather than a purely intellectual or scientific attainment; our habits of thought are inseparable from our habits of will, and the product of virtuous activity is not merely new capacity for virtue but new insight into duty. The scientific expert is not necessarily identical with the practical expert in the conduct of the individual life any more than the practical statesman is identical with the student of Political Science. There is such a thing as moral genius, that gift of moral originality which enables its possessor to make new departures in the moral life, to mark an epoch in the moral progress of the race. But this deeper insight is, like the more ordinary forms of such insight, a practical rather than

an intellectual gift. It is only the higher form of that same faculty of practical insight which is the common possession of all. It is the expression of tendencies of conduct that have been long maturing, and now find utterance more articulate than heretofore. Even the moral genius is the child of his own time; its spirit finds its expression in him, and his message is first of all to his own time.

The practical service of philosophy—so far as the individual is concerned—is negative and indirect, preparing the mind for the emergencies of conduct rather than instructing it how to meet them when they arise. It supports the authority of Conscience in general, by explaining that authority and exhibiting the common ideal of which its imperatives are the several concrete aspects. Even in cases of conflict of duties, where Conscience seems to be divided against itself, when philosophy may theoretically resolve the conflict, it can do so only by pointing from the more superficial and confused to the deeper and clearer conscience,—that is, by showing that the conflict of duties is only apparent and has its source in an external and abstract view of duty itself; and if such enlightenment of conscience is to be of practical value, a well-formed habitual morality must be presupposed. Yet, while Ethics can never supersede the ordinary conscience, or act as its substitute, it is not to be forgotten that the scientific judgments of the moralist are continuous with the moral judgments of the ordinary conscience. They are the result of the same kind of reflection, only carried further; the same tools are used, only sharpened. The systematisation of moral judgment which the moralist undertakes implies the correction of its unsystematic or contradictory elements. More generally the broad survey of the field of moral judgment which the moralist is



compelled to make, and his interpretation of the direction of moral progress, are calculated to correct the narrowness and provincialism of the ordinary conscience ; to make it more critical and less dogmatic ; more severe in its judgments of the individual's own conduct, more tolerant and historically just in its judgment of the conduct of other men and other ages ; less easily satisfied with present moral attainment, more eager for progress to parts of the field of goodness yet unconquered ; in a word, to add indefinitely to the moral culture of the individual, and by adding to his moral culture to render him more efficient in his moral practice as well as in his moral judgments.

Finally, while Mediæval casuistry concerns itself rather with the individual than with the social side of conduct, while its point of view is individual rather than social, the questions of conduct raised by the modern conscience are generally problems of social rather than of individual conduct. If we cannot be said to accept the ancient Greek view of the ethical importance of the State, and to identify the good man with the good citizen, we are learning, on the other hand, to appreciate the truth of the Christian view of the essentially social character of all virtue, and to see that the good man is always the good citizen, even if we insist that civic goodness is not the whole of goodness. The common lesson of ancient and modern ethics is, therefore, that the great practical application of ethical principles is to the social and political life. The best modern moralists, whether of the Utilitarian or of the Idealistic school, agree with Plato and Aristotle in re-echoing the claim of Socrates that the moralist is the teacher of the statesman, and that this education of the statesman is the great practical service of ethical science. In these days of a more democratic and com-

plex political organisation, in which citizenship has acquired a more extended connotation and includes many an aspect of social conduct which the Greeks would have excluded from it, and in which the conduct of the economic and industrial life of the State claims a consideration which they denied it, the significance of the service which Ethics ought to render as the guide of social and political conduct is greatly heightened. If there is one lesson which the long course of moral reflection is calculated to teach, it is that the ethical view of conduct is always, as such, the social view of it, and therefore that the ultimate inspiration of the political and economic life must come from Ethics, that the true Sociology must be guided by ethical principles. And apart from any concrete or detailed guidance, apart from any aid it may give in the solution of particular "cases" of social conscience, Ethics ought, by its very insistence upon the supremacy of the ethical or social point of view, to guide the currents of social conduct, of the civic or political life in the large sense which I have explained, along the channel of its true welfare.

## II

### THE ALLEGED FALLACIES IN MILL'S 'UTILITARIANISM'<sup>1</sup>

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IT may well seem superfluous, at this time of day, to discuss once more the familiar argument of Mill in the essay on 'Utilitarianism.' Have not the undoubted fallacies in that argument been shown up again and again by critics alike of the Intuitionist and of the Idealistic school? The present writer formerly shared this view, but repeated study of the essay has convinced him of its essential injustice. All that is necessary, in defence of Mill from the charge that he has fallen into fallacies which are patent to the veriest tyro in logic, is to interpret his argument in the light of its context and of the purpose the author has in view. It is usual, while admitting Mill's candour and "sympathetic insight," to accuse him at the same time of a "facility in making compromises"<sup>2</sup> and a transgression of the most familiar rules of logic which is hardly credible in the author of an epoch-making work on that subject. Even so careful a writer as Professor Sorley<sup>3</sup> attributes to him "a logical quibble" which is discreditable either

<sup>1</sup> Reprinted from the 'Philosophical Review,' vol. xvii., 1908.

<sup>2</sup> J. S. Mackenzie, 'Introduction to Social Philosophy,' p. 204.

<sup>3</sup> 'Ethics of Naturalism' (2nd ed.), p. 65.

to his candour or to his intelligence. I have preferred to assume that Mill is at once candid and coherent in his reasoning, and I think I have succeeded in clearing up the apparent fallacies, if not in eliminating the inconsistencies, in his ethical thought as presented in the famous essay.

To take first the most glaring, and therefore to my mind the most incredible case, the critics have with one consent accused Mill of committing the fallacy either of Composition or of Division in his "proof" of Utilitarianism—that is, in effecting the transition from egoistic to universalistic Hedonism. The argument in question is as follows: "No reason can be given why the general happiness is desirable, except that each person, so far as he believes it to be attainable, desires his own happiness. This, however, being a fact, we have not only all the proof which the case admits of, but all which it is possible to require, that happiness is a good: that each person's happiness is a good to that person, and the general happiness, therefore, a good to the aggregate of all persons."<sup>1</sup> "It would be difficult," says Professor Mackenzie, "to collect in a short space so many fallacies as are here committed."<sup>2</sup> Let us confine our attention, in the meantime, to "the fallacy involved in the inference that 'the general happiness is a good to the aggregate of all persons.'"<sup>3</sup> "The fallacy is that which is known in logic as 'the fallacy of composition.' It is inferred that because my pleasures are a good to me, yours to you, his to him, and so on, therefore my pleasures + your pleasures + his pleasures are a good to me + you + him. It is forgotten that neither the pleasures nor the persons are capable of being made into an aggregate. . . . Mill's argument would hold if the minds of all human

<sup>1</sup> 'Utilitarianism' (9th ed.), p. 53.

<sup>2</sup> 'Manual of Ethics,' p. 219.

beings were to be rolled into one, so as to form an aggregate. But as it is, 'the aggregate of all persons' is nobody, and consequently nothing can be a good to him. A good must be a good for somebody."<sup>1</sup>

Similarly Professor Sorley says: "J. S. Mill, while emphasising the distinction between modern Utilitarianism and the older Epicureanism, has even allowed his official 'proof' of utilitarianism—such proof, that is, as he thinks the principle of Utility to be susceptible of—to rest on the ambiguity between individual and social happiness."<sup>2</sup> "'No reason,' he says, 'can be given why the general happiness is desirable, except that each person, so far as he believes it to be attainable, desires his own happiness.' And this admission, which seems as good as saying that no reason at all can be given why the individual should desire the general happiness, is only held to be a sufficient reason for it through the assumption that what is good for all as an aggregate is good for each member of the aggregate: 'that each person's happiness is a good to that person, and the general happiness, therefore, a good to the aggregate of all persons.'"<sup>3</sup>

Professor Dewey's criticism is on the same lines. "Does it follow," he asks, "that because the happiness of *A* is an end to *A*, the happiness of *B* an end to *B*, and the happiness of *C* an end to *C*, that, therefore, the happiness of *B* and *C* is an end to *A*? There is obviously no connection between the premises and the supposed conclusion. And there appears to be, as Mill puts it, only on account of the ambiguity of his last clause, 'the general happiness a good to the aggregate of all persons.' The good of *A* and *B* and *C* may be a good to the aggregate ( $A + B + C$ ), but what

<sup>1</sup> 'Manual of Ethics,' pp. 219-220.      <sup>2</sup> 'Ethics of Naturalism,' p. 47.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 64.

universalistic hedonism requires is that the aggregate good of  $A + B + C$  be a good to  $A$  and to  $B$  and to  $C$  taken separately,—a very different proposition. Mill is guilty of the fallacy known logically as the fallacy of division,—arguing from a collective whole to the distributed units. Because all men want to be happy, it hardly follows that every man wants all to be happy.”<sup>1</sup>

Even the late Professor Sidgwick, in the long series of revisions to which he subjected the 'Methods of Ethics,' seems to have remained convinced to the end of the justice of such a criticism of Mill's famous "proof." "In giving as a statement of this principle that 'the general happiness is *desirable*,' he must be understood to mean (and his whole treatise shows that he does mean) that it is what each individual *ought* to desire, or at least—in the stricter sense of 'ought'—to aim at realising in action. But this proposition is not established by Mill's reasoning, even if we grant that what is actually desired may be legitimately inferred to be in this sense desirable. For an aggregate of actual desires, each directed towards a different part of the general happiness, does not constitute an actual desire for the general happiness, existing in any individual; and Mill would certainly not contend that a desire which does not exist in any individual can possibly exist in an aggregate of individuals. There being therefore no actual desire—so far as this reasoning goes—for the general happiness, the proposition that the general happiness is desirable cannot be in this way established: so that there is a gap in the expressed argument, which can, I think, only be filled by some such proposition as that which I have above tried to exhibit as the intuition of Rational Benevolence.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 'Outlines of Ethics,' pp. 55-56.

<sup>2</sup> 'Methods of Ethics' (6th ed.), p. 388.

Now it is perfectly clear that, if Mill is attempting, in the argument in question, to prove that the general happiness is an object to be desired by each individual since each individual desires his own happiness, he is guilty of the fallacy of which his critics so unanimously convict him. The previous question, however, is whether he is attempting anything of the kind. Sidgwick alone has thought it necessary to offer any evidence that this is the object of the "proof" offered in chapter iv. After quoting Mill's statement that, while proof, in the strict sense, is impossible, "considerations may be presented capable of determining the intellect to" accept "the Utilitarian formula," he says that "he subsequently makes clear that by 'acceptance of the Utilitarian formula' he means the acceptance, not of the agent's own greatest happiness, but of 'the greatest amount of happiness altogether' as the ultimate 'end of human action' and 'standard of morality': to promote which is, in the Utilitarian view, the supreme 'directive rule of human conduct.' Then when he comes to give the 'proof'—in the larger sense before explained—of this rule or formula, he offers the following argument."<sup>1</sup> But if we take Mill's own statement of the meaning of "the utilitarian doctrine," given in the passage which we are discussing, we find that it is not the doctrine of Utilitarianism in the full sense of universalistic Hedonism, but simply the underlying and more general doctrine of Hedonism itself. "Questions about ends are, in other words, questions what things are desirable. The utilitarian doctrine is, that happiness is desirable, and the only thing desirable, as an end; all other things being only desirable as means to that end."<sup>2</sup> The chapter is entitled, "Of What Sort of Proof the

<sup>1</sup> 'Methods of Ethics' (6th ed.), p. 387.

<sup>2</sup> 'Utilitarianism,' ch. iv, p. 52.

Principle of Utility is Susceptible," and when we return to chapter ii. for a definition of the "Principle of Utility," we find that "the creed which accepts as the foundation of morals, Utility, or the Greatest-Happiness Principle, holds that actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness, wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness"; and that "the theory of life on which this theory of morality is grounded" is "that pleasure, and freedom from pain, are the only things desirable as ends; and that all desirable things (which are as numerous in the utilitarian as in any other scheme) are desirable either for the pleasure inherent in themselves, or as means to the promotion of pleasure and the prevention of pain."<sup>1</sup> All that Mill is attempting to prove, therefore, is that the object of aggregate desire, since it must be the same as that of individual desire, and this is happiness, is aggregate happiness. What he conceives himself to have proved is, in his own words, "that happiness is a good: that each person's happiness is a good to that person, and the general happiness, therefore, a good to the aggregate of all persons. Happiness has made out its title as *one* of the ends of conduct, and consequently one of the criteria of morality."<sup>2</sup> There is no suggestion that the conclusion is that the general happiness is a good to each individual, but only "to the aggregate of all persons." It is the critics who, knowing that Mill's ethical standard is the general happiness, have read the former meaning into his present argument, assuming that he is here attempting to prove the validity of that criterion, while what he is really dealing with is the more elementary principle of Hedonism itself, and his argument simply is that, since the good of the individual—that which he desires and regards as desirable—is happiness, the object of aggregate or

<sup>1</sup> 'Utilitarianism,' ch. iv., pp. 9, 10.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 53.



collective (not individual) desire can only be happiness. There is no word of the attitude of the individual to the general happiness ; there is no passing over from the collective to the distributive sense of the terms.

That this is the true interpretation of the argument becomes still more evident from Mill's final statement of the result. " It results from the preceding considerations, that there is in reality nothing desired except happiness. Whatever is desired otherwise than as a means to some end beyond itself, and ultimately to happiness, is desired as itself a part of happiness, and is not desired for itself until it has become so. . . . We have now, then, an answer to the question, of what sort of proof the principle of utility is susceptible. If the opinion which I have now stated is psychologically true,—if human nature is so constituted as to desire nothing which is not either a part of happiness or a means of happiness, we can have no other proof, and we require no other, that these are the only things desirable. If so, happiness is the sole end of human action, and the promotion of it the test by which to judge of all human conduct ; from whence it necessarily follows that it must be the criterion of morality, since a part is included in the whole."<sup>1</sup> And the chapter closes with the following words : " Both in feeling and in conduct, habit is the only thing which imparts certainty ; and it is because of the importance to others of being able to rely absolutely on one's feelings and conduct, and to oneself of being able to rely on one's own, that the will to do right ought to be cultivated into this habitual independence. In other words, this state of the will is a means to good, not intrinsically a good ; and does not contradict the doctrine that nothing is a good to human beings but in so far as it is either

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 57, 58.

itself pleasurable, or a means of attaining pleasure or averting pain. But if this doctrine be true, the principle of utility is proved.”<sup>1</sup> It is unreasonable to suppose that, in thus concluding the argument, Mill should have omitted all reference to the essential element in the thesis supposed to have been proved. But we find him once more identifying “the principle of utility” with that of Hedonism, not with that of universalistic Hedonism or Utilitarianism.

The second in the “collection of fallacies” which this passage contains, according to Professor Mackenzie and others, is the result of “an ambiguity in the word ‘desirable.’” “‘The only proof,’ he says, ‘capable of being given that an object is visible, is that people actually see it. The only proof that a sound is audible, is that people hear it. . . . In like manner, I apprehend, the sole evidence it is possible to produce that anything is desirable, is that people do actually desire it.’ It is here assumed that the meaning of the word ‘desirable’ is analogous to that of ‘visible’ and ‘audible.’ But ‘visible’ means ‘able to be seen,’ and ‘audible’ means ‘able to be heard’; whereas ‘desirable’ does not usually mean merely ‘able to be desired.’ When we say that anything is desirable, we do not usually mean merely that it is able to be desired. There is scarcely anything that is not able to be desired. What we mean is rather that it is *reasonably to be desired*, or that it *ought* to be desired. When the Hedonist says that pleasure is the only thing that is desirable, he means that it is the only thing that *ought* to be desired. But the form of the word ‘desirable’ seems to have misled several writers into the notion that they ought to show also that pleasure is the only thing that is *capable* of being desired. . . . The fallacy here involved

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 61.

is that known to writers on Logic as the 'Fallacy of Figure of Speech' (*figuræ dictionis*)."<sup>1</sup> And Professor Sidgwick remarks: "It has been suggested that I have overlooked a confusion in Mill's mind between two possible meanings of the term 'desirable,' (1) what can be desired, and (2) what ought to be desired. . . . I was aware of this confusion, but thought it unnecessary for my present purpose to discuss it."<sup>2</sup>

Here, again, I cannot believe that Mill was the victim of such an obvious fallacy. We must remember that the little work so severely dealt with by the critics is a popular essay, not a philosophical treatise, and that it originally appeared in the pages of 'Fraser's Magazine.' We are not to look, therefore, for the precision of statement which would be natural in a scientific work. Mill assumes that what we ought to desire must be at the same time what we can desire, that the desirable in the ethical sense must be found within the field of the desirable in the psychological sense, although the two fields are not, of course, coextensive. Or, to express the distinction and the relation between the two senses of the term in another way, he assumes that the Good—that which is truly to be desired—must be found within, and not without, the sphere of goods—that is, the things which we actually desire. What he seeks to prove is "that to think of an object as desirable . . . and to think of it as pleasant, are one and the same thing; and that to desire anything, except in proportion as the idea of it is pleasant, is a physical and metaphysical impossibility."<sup>3</sup> The conclusion of the argument is, in his own statement, that "nothing is a good to human beings but in so far as it is either itself pleasurable, or

<sup>1</sup> Mackenzie, 'Manual of Ethics,' pp. 213, 214 (footnote).

<sup>2</sup> 'Methods of Ethics,' p. 388 (footnote).

<sup>3</sup> 'Utilitarianism,' p. 58.

a means of attaining pleasure or averting pain.”<sup>1</sup> And we must admit that the truth of the doctrine of Psychological Hedonism carries with it the negation of any non-hedonistic theory of the Good, or the desirable in the sense of what ought to be desired. While we cannot say that what we are able to desire is, as such, what we ought to desire, we must admit that what we ought to desire is what we are able to desire. It follows that, if pleasure is the only thing that we can desire, what we ought to desire cannot be anything other than pleasure.

Another fallacy of which Mill has been accused, though not so frequently or so explicitly, is that of *Ignoratio Elenchi* or Irrelevancy. Professor Sorley says, for example, that “he confused the purely psychological question of the motives that influence human conduct with the ethical question of the end to which conduct ought to be directed.”<sup>2</sup> Others have maintained that he confused the question of the sanctions of right conduct with that of its obligatoriness. But it is quite clear that in chapter iii., “Of the Ultimate Sanction of the Principle of Utility,” Mill is concerned solely with the question of the motivation of right or utilitarian conduct, with the *feeling* of obligation, and how it may be produced. “The question is often asked,” he says, “and properly so, in regard to any supposed moral standard, —What is its sanction? what are the motives to obey it? or more specifically, what is the source of its obligation? whence does it derive its binding force? It is a necessary part of moral philosophy to provide the answer to this question; which, though frequently assuming the shape of an objection to the utilitarian morality, as if it had some special applicability to that above others, really arises in regard to all standards.

<sup>1</sup> ‘Utilitarianism,’ p. 61.

<sup>2</sup> ‘Ethics of Naturalism,’ pp. 63, 64.

It arises, in fact, whenever a person is called on to *adopt* a standard or refer morality to any basis on which he has not been accustomed to rest it. For the customary morality, that which education and opinion have consecrated, is the only one which presents itself to the mind with the feeling of being *in itself* obligatory : and when a person is asked to believe that this morality *derives* its obligation from some general principle round which custom has not thrown the same halo, the assertion is to him a paradox ; the supposed corollaries seem to have a more binding force than the original theorem ; the superstructure seems to stand better without, than with, what is represented as its foundation. He says to himself, I feel that I am bound not to rob or murder, betray or deceive ; but why am I bound to promote the general happiness ? If my own happiness lies in something else, why may I not give that the preference ? ” <sup>1</sup> And when he comes to describe the deeper sanction, undiscovered by his predecessors, with the exception of Hume, of the utilitarian morality, namely, the natural sympathy with the general happiness, “ the feeling of unity ” with our fellows, he says that it is “ this basis of powerful natural sentiment . . . which, when once the general happiness is recognised as the ethical standard, will constitute the strength of the utilitarian morality.” <sup>2</sup> Comte, he says, has “ shown the possibility of giving to the service of humanity, even without the aid of belief in a Providence, both the physical power and the social efficacy of a religion ; making it take hold of human life, and colour all thought, feeling, and action, in a manner of which the greatest ascendancy ever exercised by any religion may be but a type and foretaste ; and of which the danger is, not that it should be insufficient, but that it should be so excessive as

<sup>1</sup> ‘Utilitarianism,’ pp. 39, 40.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 46.

to interfere unduly with human freedom and individuality." <sup>1</sup>

From these statements it is clear that the problem with which Mill is concerned, in this chapter at least, is simply the psychological and practical one of the moral dynamic, and that his solution of that problem is found in the Christian "enthusiasm of humanity." We are far too apt to think of Mill as a technically philosophical writer, because we cannot help thinking of him as the author of the 'Logic,' and to forget that he, no less than Bentham and the other Utilitarians, is primarily dominated by the practical interest of the social reformer. He is really far more interested in the question how, "once the general happiness is recognised as the ethical standard," this ideal is to be practically realised, than in the question of the ethical criterion and its proof. It is, therefore, entirely to miss the point of Mill's argument in this chapter to discover in it a merely subjective interpretation of moral obligation, as Bradley does in the following statement: "Not only has moral obligation nothing in Mr Mill's theory to which it can attach itself save the likes or dislikes of one or more individuals, but in the end it is itself nothing more than a similar feeling. . . . I should say that any theory which maintains that a man may get rid of his sense of moral obligation if he can, and that, if he does so, the moral obligation is gone, is as grossly immoral a theory as ever was published. Does Mr Mill repudiate the doctrine? Not at all; he evidently accepts it, though he prefers not to say so. . . . If then all that the moral 'ought' means is that I happen to have a feeling which I need not have, and that this feeling attaches itself now to one set of pleasures and now to another set according to accident or my liking, would

<sup>1</sup> 'Utilitarianism,' p. 49.

it not be better altogether to have done with the word, and, as some have done, openly to reject it and give it up, since already we have given up all that it stands for ? ”<sup>1</sup> Mill is not concerned with the question of the objective basis or validity of moral obligation, but only with its subjective or psychological explanation.

Are we, then, to conclude that Mill offers no proof of Utilitarianism as an ethical theory, no demonstration of the general happiness as the moral criterion ? The truth is, in my opinion, that he thinks formal proof as unnecessary as it is impossible. Hedonism he does attempt to prove, as we have seen ; but having proved that pleasure is the only thing ultimately desirable or good, he seems to think that it follows that the good, and therefore the ethical criterion, is the general happiness, or the greatest happiness, not of the individual, but of the greatest number of individuals. If we would make explicit the ground of this conclusion, which is left implicit by Mill himself, it would be found, I think, in the consideration that, since pleasure is the Good, the greater pleasure must, as such, be better than the less, and the greatest happiness of the greatest number (if not of all sentient beings) must therefore be better than the greatest happiness of the individual or of any number of individuals less than the total number. He assumes, as a matter of common sense, what Sidgwick represents as the result of an application of the principle of impartiality or equality—namely, that from the point of view of happiness, which is essentially a quantitative or mathematical whole, each ought to count for one and no one for more than one. The distributive principle of the Good is found, in other words, in the nature of the Good. Hence, he says, “let utilitarians never cease to claim the morality of self-devotion as a

<sup>1</sup> ‘Ethical Studies,’ pp. 111-112.

possession which belongs by as good a right to them as either to the Stoic or to the Transcendentalist. . . . The happiness which forms the utilitarian standard of what is right in conduct is not the agent's own happiness, but that of all concerned. As between his own happiness and that of others, utilitarianism requires him to be as strictly impartial as a disinterested and benevolent spectator. In the golden rule of Jesus of Nazareth, we read the complete spirit of the ethics of utility. To do as one would be done by, and to love one's neighbour as oneself, constitute the ideal perfection of utilitarian morality."<sup>1</sup> It must be remembered that, as Mr Douglas has pointed out, "it is more characteristic of Mill's 'Utilitarianism' than of any preceding hedonistic system of ethics to consider the facts of moral experience directly, and to make them the basis of ethical theory. He never loses that sense of an objective and obligatory end for human conduct which is the essential element in the moral judgment of actions."<sup>2</sup> It is significant that, in the one reference he makes to an explicit basis of altruistic duty (though even here it is in a practical interest that he refers to it), Mill suggests the possibility, since exploited by Sidgwick, of a reconciliation of Utilitarianism and Intuitionism through the principle of benevolence. "If there be anything innate in the matter, I see no reason why the feeling which is innate should not be that of regard to the pleasures and pains of others. If there is any principle of morals which is intuitively obligatory, I should say it must be that. If so, the intuitive ethics would coincide with the utilitarian, and there would be no further quarrel between them. Even as it is, the intuitive moralists, though they believe that there are other

<sup>1</sup> 'Utilitarianism,' pp. 24, 25.

<sup>2</sup> 'Ethics of J. S. Mill,' *Introductory Essays*, p. lxxx.



intuitive moral obligations, do already believe this to be one ; for they unanimously hold that a large *portion* of morality turns upon the consideration due to the interests of our fellow creatures.”<sup>1</sup>

That Mill's point of view is essentially identical with the Quantitive or Mathematical point of view of the late Professor Sidgwick is made clear from his final account of Justice in chapter v. “This great moral duty,” he tells us, “rests upon a still deeper foundation, being a direct emanation from the first principles of morals, and not a mere logical corollary from secondary or derivative doctrines. It is involved in the very meaning of Utility, or the Greatest-Happiness Principle. That principle is a mere form of words without rational signification, unless one person's happiness, supposed equal in degree (with the proper allowance made for kind), is counted for exactly as much as another's. Those conditions being supplied, Bentham's dictum, ‘everybody to count for one, nobody for more than one,’ might be written under the principle of utility as an explanatory commentary.”<sup>2</sup> And in the footnote to this passage he adds : “This implication, in the first principle of the utilitarian scheme, of perfect impartiality between persons, is regarded by Mr Herbert Spencer (in his ‘Social Statics’) as a disproof of the pretensions of utility to be a sufficient guide to right ; since (he says) the principle of utility presupposes the anterior principle, that everybody has an equal right to happiness. It may be more correctly described as supposing that equal amounts of happiness are equally desirable, whether felt by the same or by different persons. This, however, is not a presupposition ; not a premise needful to support the principle of utility, but the very principle itself ; for what is the principle of utility, if it be not

<sup>1</sup> ‘Utilitarianism,’ pp. 44, 45.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., pp. 92, 93.

that 'happiness' and 'desirable' are synonymous terms? If there is any anterior principle implied, it can be no other than this, that the truths of arithmetic are applicable to the valuation of happiness, as of all other measurable quantities."

But does not altruistic Hedonism or Utilitarianism contradict the underlying doctrine of Psychological Hedonism? As Bradley has said, "If all that I desire and can desire is my pleasure, . . . then the sole desirable is a state or states of my own feeling, and in the second place, whatever is a means to that. To desire an object which is not the idea of my pleasure is psychologically impossible. . . . And such an object is the idea of the pleasure of others considered not as conducing to mine. . . . To tell me the pleasure of others is desirable for me, is to tell me you think it will conduce to my own."<sup>1</sup> Or, as Professor Sorley has put it: "Utilitarianism only becomes a practicable end for individual conduct when psychological hedonism has been given up. It is futile to say that one ought to pursue the greatest happiness of the greatest number, unless it is possible for the individual to act for something else than his own pleasure,—that is, for an end which is for him not pleasure at all. In a word, utilitarianism, while maintaining that the only thing worth desiring is pleasure, must at the same time admit that pleasure is not the only object that can be or is desired: otherwise, it can never advance from the egoistic to the universalistic form."<sup>2</sup> But does not such a criticism, when applied to Mill, ignore the other factor in his ethical psychology—namely, sympathy? Man is naturally, according to Mill, sympathetic with the pleasures and pains of others; he is a social, and not a merely selfish being, and his social sympathy carries with it the ex-

<sup>1</sup> 'Ethical Studies,' p. 103.

<sup>2</sup> 'Ethics of Naturalism,' p. 77.

tension of his desire of pleasure to the pleasure of others, which he desires as if it were his own. Conscious as he is of his unity with them, he identifies himself with them, and seeks for them what he seeks for himself, and as if he were seeking it for himself—namely, pleasure. If he were not thus naturally sympathetic, he could never make the transition from his own pleasure to that of others; his sympathy makes him unconscious of any transition from the one to the other. Here, again, we must remember that Mill's real interest lies in the practical rather than in the theoretical problem, and we have seen that it is to sympathy that he looks as the great agent in the promotion of the general happiness by the individual.

As regards the doctrine of "Psychological Hedonism" itself, while it can hardly be doubted that Mill did actually hold that view, I cannot but think that, in the present work, it is not this doctrine, in any strict sense, that he is concerned to defend. If his statements and admissions in the course of the argument are carefully noted, it will be found, I think, that when he says that "happiness" is the sole object of human desire, he is using the term in a large popular sense, to include the things in which happiness is found, rather than in the strict sense in which he has defined it in chapter ii.: "By happiness is intended pleasure and the absence of pain"; and it is significant that he uses, throughout the argument, the term "happiness" rather than the term "pleasure." His thesis, as he himself states it, is that "human nature is so constituted as to desire nothing which is not either a part of happiness or a means of happiness."<sup>1</sup> In summing up the result of the discussion, he says that "it results from the preceding considerations, that there is in reality nothing

<sup>1</sup> 'Utilitarianism,' p. 58.

desired except happiness. Whatever is desired otherwise than as a means to some end beyond itself, and ultimately to happiness, is desired as itself a part of happiness, and is not desired for itself until it has become so. Those who desire virtue for its own sake desire it either because the consciousness of it is a pleasure, or because the consciousness of being without it is a pain, or for both reasons united. . . . If one of these gave him no pleasure, and the other no pain, he would not love or desire virtue, or would desire it only for the other benefits which it might produce to himself or to persons whom he cared for.”<sup>1</sup> Or take the following statement of the problem and of its solution: “And now to decide whether this is really so; whether mankind do desire nothing for itself but that which is a pleasure to them, or of which the absence is a pain. . . . Desiring a thing and finding it pleasant, aversion to it and thinking of it as painful, are phenomena entirely inseparable, or rather two parts of the same phenomenon; in strictness of language, two different modes of naming the same psychological fact: . . . to think of an object as desirable (unless for the sake of its consequences), and to think of it as pleasant, are one and the same thing; and . . . to desire anything, except in proportion as the idea of it is pleasant, is a physical and metaphysical impossibility.”<sup>2</sup>

All that Mill is concerned to prove, then, is that pleasure is not merely a constant but a determining element in desire and choice; he does not maintain that it is the constant object of desire and choice. And if the former seems to us, as Sidgwick says, a statement so obvious as to be almost a tautology, we must remember that its familiarity is due to the advance of psychology since Mill's time, and that Mill had an im-

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 57, 58.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 58.

portant polemical interest in emphasising the omnipresence of pleasure in desire and choice, since, if pleasure were inseparable from the ends which determine human action, a strong presumption would be created in favour of the hedonistic theory of Good. And as against a merely rationalistic or rigoristic theory of the Good, the demonstration of the presence of pleasure as the determining principle in all desire and choice might well seem to be final. It is to be remembered that Mill is not conscious of the distinction between pleasure as the dynamic and pleasure as the object of choice, and that he uses the same term "pleasure" indifferently in the two senses of "pleasant object" and "pleasant state" or "pleasantness." This very looseness in the use of the leading term in the argument suggests that the point of his argument does not require insistence upon the distinction.

That this is the true interpretation of Mill's argument is confirmed by his account of the relation of happiness as a whole to its constituent elements or "parts," as well as by his account of the relation of desire to its object. "The ingredients of happiness," he says, "are very various, and each of them is desirable in itself, and not merely when considered as swelling an aggregate. The principle of utility does not mean that any given pleasure, as music, for instance, or any given exemption from pain, as for example, health, are to be looked upon as means to a collective something termed happiness, and to be desired on that account. They are desired and desirable in and for themselves; besides being means, they are a part of the end."<sup>1</sup> "In being desired for its own sake," such an object "is, however, desired as *part* of happiness. The person is made, or thinks he would be made, happy by its mere possession; and is

<sup>1</sup> 'Utilitarianism,' p. 54.

made unhappy by failure to obtain it. The desire of it is not a different thing from the desire of happiness any more than the love of music, or the desire of health. They are included in happiness. They are some of the elements of which the desire of happiness is made up. Happiness is not an abstract idea, but a concrete whole; and these are some of its parts.”<sup>1</sup> To desire a thing he defines as to “think of it in a pleasurable light, or of its absence in a painful one”;<sup>2</sup> he includes in the term “the repelling influence of pain as well as the attractive one of pleasure.”<sup>3</sup> Mill classifies desires as primitive and acquired, and in both cases he recognises the presence of an object, other than pleasure or pain, to which the desire is directed. “Life would be a poor thing, very ill provided with sources of happiness, if there were not this provision of nature, by which things originally indifferent, but conducive to, or otherwise associated with, the satisfaction of our primitive desires, become in themselves sources of pleasure more valuable than the primitive pleasures.”<sup>4</sup> In the case of the desire of power or fame, “it is the strong association thus generated between them and all our objects of desire, which gives to the direct desire of them the intensity it often assumes, so as in some characters to surpass in strength all other desires.”<sup>5</sup> Similarly in the case of the love of money, “the desire to possess it is often stronger than the desire to use it, and goes on increasing when all the desires which point to ends beyond it, to be compassed by it, are falling off. It may then be said truly, that money is desired not for the sake of an end, but as part of the end. From being a means to happiness, it has come to be itself a principal ingredient of the individual’s conception of happiness.”<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> ‘Utilitarianism,’ p. 56.<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 60.<sup>3</sup> Ibid.<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 56.<sup>5</sup> Ibid.<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 55.

And "the desire of virtue is not as universal, but it is as authentic a fact, as the desire of happiness." <sup>1</sup>

There remains the most notorious of all Mill's so-called fallacies—namely, the introduction into a hedonistic theory of a qualitative distinction between pleasures. Even in this case, however, I question whether, if we take careful account of the way in which the distinction is introduced and used by Mill, we shall find it to be really inconsistent with his fundamental position. He is dealing with the objections to Utilitarianism which arise from a misconception of the doctrine. Among these unfounded objections is that "to suppose that life has (as they express it) no higher end than pleasure,—no better and nobler object of pursuit," is "a doctrine worthy only of swine." The answer is that "the comparison of the Epicurean life to that of beasts is felt as degrading, precisely because a beast's pleasures do not satisfy a human being's conceptions of happiness. Human beings have faculties more elevated than the animal appetites, and when once made conscious of them, do not regard anything as happiness which does not include their gratification." <sup>2</sup> Not only, however, is man capable of pleasures of which the mere animal is incapable; not only does human happiness contain elements not found in animal happiness, but those men who are competently acquainted with what are generally called the higher forms of human happiness are unanimous in their preference of these to the so-called lower forms, and so absolute is this preference that they prefer the higher pleasure, "even though knowing it to be attended with a greater amount of discontent, and would not resign it for any quantity of the other pleasure which their nature is capable of. . . . No intelligent human being would consent to be a fool, no instructed person

<sup>1</sup> 'Utilitarianism,' p. 53.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 11.

would be an ignoramus, no person of feeling and conscience would be selfish and base, even though they should be persuaded that the fool, the dunce, or the rascal is better satisfied with his lot than they are with theirs. They would not resign what they possess more than he, for the most complete satisfaction of all the desires which they have in common with him.”<sup>1</sup> The higher being’s “sense of dignity” is “so essential a part of the happiness of those in whom it is strong, that nothing which conflicts with it could be, otherwise than momentarily, an object of desire to them.”<sup>2</sup>

The argument, then, is simply that, as a matter of psychological fact, the pleasures which form the constituent elements of human happiness are different from those which make up the happiness of the mere animal; that the human subject of happiness not merely prefers certain classes of pleasures to certain others, but regards the former as preferable in kind to the latter, and that this preference determines the nature of his happiness: the desire is so set upon certain forms of happiness that their absence makes the man unhappy. That the distinction between higher and lower pleasures is only intended, however, as a provisional, not as a final distinction is clear from the fact that Mill proceeds to reduce what is, from the individual point of view, a qualitative distinction to a merely quantitative one from the social point of view. “I have dwelt on this point, as being a necessary part of a perfectly just conception of Utility or Happiness, considered as the directive rule of human conduct. But it is by no means an indispensable condition to the acceptance of the utilitarian standard; for that standard is not the agent’s own greatest happiness, but the greatest amount of happiness altogether; and if it may possibly be doubted

<sup>1</sup> ‘Utilitarianism.’ pp. 12, 13.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 13.



whether a noble character is always the happier for its nobleness, there can be no doubt that it makes other people happier, and that the world in general is immensely a gainer by it.”<sup>1</sup> And as if to put an end to any possible lingering question in the reader’s mind as to the objective validity of the qualitative distinction which is yet so vital an element in the happiness of the individual, Mill thus explicitly states the value of the good or virtuous will: “Both in feeling and in conduct, habit is the only thing which imparts certainty; and it is because of the importance to others of being able to rely absolutely on one’s feelings and conduct, and to oneself of being able to rely on one’s own, that the will to do right ought to be cultivated into this habitual independence. In other words, this state of the will is a means to good, not intrinsically a good; and does not contradict the doctrine that nothing is a good to human beings but in so far as it is either itself pleasurable, or a means of attaining pleasure or averting pain.”<sup>2</sup>

That the distinction between the higher and the lower pleasures is ultimately for Mill not a qualitative, but a quantitative distinction, becomes clear from the account of the paramount claims of Justice in chapter v. “Our notion, therefore, of the claim we have on our fellow creatures to join in making safe for us the very groundwork of our existence, gathers feelings round it so much more intense than those concerned in any of the more common cases of utility, that the difference in degree (as is often the case in psychology) becomes a real difference in kind. The claim assumes that character of absoluteness, that apparent infinity, and incommensurability with all other considerations, which constitute the distinction between the feeling of right

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 16.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 61.

and wrong and that of ordinary expediency and in expediency.”<sup>1</sup> Interpreting the statement of the qualitative distinction between pleasures in chapter ii. in the light of this passage, we see that all that Mill intended to assert was that, “as is often the case in psychology,” a transcendently important “difference in degree” “becomes a real difference in kind”; for it is obvious that from the social, if not also from the individual point of view, the so-called “higher” pleasures do thus differ from the so-called “lower” in the degree of their utility or hedonistic importance. I think, therefore, that we must agree with Professor Stewart when he says: “It is sometimes urged that Mill has no right ‘on his own principles’ . . . to recognise, as he does, a qualitative difference between pleasures. I venture to maintain that few moralists have a better right. His critics seem to forget that his standard of conduct is the public good. His standard of conduct is emphatically not pleasurable feeling. Only an eristic treatment of isolated phrases (phrases which need not surprise any one who looks at Mill’s system in its place in the history of English Ethics) could represent it as such. Mill’s ‘hedonism’ is pretty much on a par with that of the writer of the E. N., vii., 11-14.”<sup>2</sup>

All that I have tried to prove, however, in this case as in that of Psychological Hedonism, is that Mill was not concerned, in the essay on Utilitarianism, with the deeper ethical question which we cannot help raising. His entire argument is dominated by the practical purpose which inspires the essay, as it inspired the Utilitarians as a group of thinkers who were primarily not theoretical moralists but social reformers. Had the

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 81.

<sup>2</sup> ‘Notes on the Nicomachean Ethics,’ vol. ii., p. 434.

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deeper question, whether the qualitative distinction in pleasure has objective as well as subjective, logical as well as psychological, validity occurred to Mill, I cannot doubt that he would have seen, as clearly as his critics have since done, the essential inconsistency of such a view with a hedonistic theory of ethics.

### III

## MORALITY AND RELIGION<sup>1</sup>

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I seem to remember that it was inculcated as one of the fundamental principles of Homiletics that the preacher must preach to the ordinary man, and that if he is to preach to the ordinary man, he must take the ordinary man's point of view. He must not take his theology—and still less must he take his philosophy—into the pulpit. And it has often been urged that the academic and scholastic life of the University and of the Divinity Hall unfits the preacher for his work, just to the extent that it separates him from the ordinary life and accustoms him to an “extraordinary” way of looking at things. It would ill become me to make such an attack upon the academic and scholastic life. Yet we all feel that there is a profound truth in the criticism, and that we have not entirely refuted it when we have dubbed it “Philistinism.”

The preacher stands face to face with life—just herein does he differ from the mere teacher. His function is certainly to teach, but his lessons are lessons of life and his fundamental purpose is to influence life, to Christianise

<sup>1</sup> Presidential Address to the Edinburgh University United Free Church Students' Society, October 1901.

it. Christianity is an interpretation of life, and an interpretation that has to be lucid if it is to be understood. It is an ideal of life, which it is the office of the preacher to present in such a way as to influence men to realise it in their lives. It is not an abstract ideal; no true ideal is abstract. It is the ordinary life idealised; the ordinary life as it looks from the highest point of view which has ever been reached by the human spirit, from what the preacher of Christianity believes to be the divine point of view. It must therefore be capable of application to the actual life of the ordinary man, and to all the specific practical occupations and interests of that life. It ought to relate itself to life at every point, and the function of the preacher is to bring it into this relation to life, to apply it to conduct; and by relating it to life and applying it to conduct, so to exhibit the Christian ideal in all the wealth of its concrete significance that his hearers shall recognise in it the true ideal of their own individual lives, and shall thus be moved—as thus only can they be moved—to realise it in their lives.

Now the criticism which is so easy for the pew to make, but which the pew cannot help making, and after all has a right to make, is that the pulpit largely fails to make this application of Christianity to life and conduct, that the ideal it presents is—perhaps in the main—an abstract and impracticable ideal, an ideal which, it is assumed, ought to be preached on Sunday, but must perforce be forgotten and exchanged for quite opposite ideals on Monday. I believe that it is this disappointment with the pulpit, far rather than any dogmatic quarrel with the Church—though the two sources of dissatisfaction are not unconnected—that accounts for the empty pews, and especially for the loss of influence of the pulpit over the young men, over

the educated classes, and over the working classes. For whatever be their attitude towards Christianity as a dogmatic system—towards Christian theology—there can be no doubt that the classes I have mentioned are open to the influence of Christianity as a religion, as a solace for life's sorrows, and as an inspiration for life's duties, and that the preacher who has truly learned his art, as I have tried to describe it, will always succeed in gaining their attention. They want help in their lives, and they have a quick instinct to discriminate between the man who can help them and the man who cannot.

The common tradition of both the Churches which have been recently so happily united is the tradition of Evangelicalism. And in so far as Evangelicalism is synonymous with earnestness and spirituality, and is opposed to the lack of earnestness and spirituality which we have been accustomed here in Scotland to call religious "moderation," it is a tradition on which any Church may justly pride itself. But, like all antitheses, it is in danger of missing the truth and importance of the opposing principle and point of view; and a time comes in the progress of life and ideas when it is found necessary to reaffirm the thesis and combine it with its antithesis in a higher and fuller truth. I think we are coming to see that the divorce between religion and morality is artificial and pernicious, that religion does not merely transcend morality but includes and interprets it. Like all traditions, even the evangelical tradition tends inevitably to lose its earlier vitality, and to become more and more a mere tradition. There is a use of evangelical phraseology which is no less deadening in its effect upon the ear that has grown accustomed to it than the use of a scholastic and theological phraseology. In his fascinating story of his

'Inner Life,' Mr John Beattie Crozier gives a somewhat humorous but really most pathetic account of this deadening effect of religious phraseology. Speaking of his youth, spent in a Canadian town, he says that religion "rarely crossed [his] mind, and when it did, it brought with it only dreary reminiscences of the days when our old Calvinistic divine, in sermons two hours long, built up anew before us, Sunday after Sunday, what he called the great Scheme of Salvation, reared on its two mighty pillars the Covenant of Works and the Covenant of Grace, between whose high and massy portals the world of human souls, driven by miserable decree, were seen passing onwards to Heaven or to Hell. The consequence was that not only did the recollection of Sunday repel me by its gloom, its stillness, and its enforced renunciations, but the Bible itself, linked as it was to it by association and doctrine, was drawn like an accomplice into the currents of my aversion, and carried along with it in one condemnation. Its high and beautiful poetry and symbolism, wrung from the stricken or exultant souls of lonely prophets, fell on my young unheeding ears like sounding brass. . . . But in spite of all this I have often thought that, had the genius and spirit of the Bible been distilled from its connected story, and presented so as to link itself on in a natural human way with the life I saw around me, I should have freely imbibed and assimilated it. . . . Everything in the mode of presenting facts was calculated to prevent their spirit and essential meaning from reaching me. Clothed in an old-world phraseology, so different from the accustomed vernacular of the school and the street, the chapters divided into separate verses, each of which, like independent sovereigns within their own territory, promulgated its oracles and decrees independent of its neighbours ; each, too,

associated with its pulpit's voice of supplication or contrition, or eye deprecating, upturned and solicitous ; the whole became, in consequence, so magnetised and charged by these currents of emotion which were passed through and over it, so smooth-worn and enamelled by repetition and use, as to lose all its own natural beauty, sense, or significance. Nowhere did the words, phrases, or sentences, so metamorphosed, catch on to the reality as I knew it within me or around me, but all hung in an enchanted dreamland between heaven and earth where I could not touch them, as in some 'Arabian Nights' ; and after a few passes from the preacher, the mesmeric sleep that fell on the text reached inwards to the characters and actors themselves. . . . Even the soft and gentle figure of Christ himself, walking serene and majestic by the shores of Galilee with his train of adoring disciples, and shedding his beneficent radiance on sickness, sorrow, and death, had always the golden halo of the old masters around its brow, and was ever the God to me rather than the man. The consequence was that the fine contagion of example which streams in on us from beings constituted in all respects like ourselves was prevented from reaching me by invisible barriers of demarcation not to be transgressed, and was lost for purposes of life. The end and upshot of it all was that, touching my own conscious life in no part of its circumference, these old-world characters and events, with the miracles they brought in their train, hung for years in conscious memory like figures merely, and were carried still clinging to me as I grew into maturity, until at last the bleak and nipping frosts of scepticism detached them from their precarious tenure on the tree." <sup>1</sup>

These words record the experience not only of the

<sup>1</sup> 'My Inner Life,' by John Beattie Crozier, pp. 159-162.



author but of many another whose "inner life" has passed through just these stages. And all of us know the deadening and mesmerising effect of phrases endlessly repeated, of a presentation of Christianity in language quite different from the vernacular. We all know the psychological veil (of whatever various threads it may be woven) which hides from our seeking spirits the reality of religion, and which, if it be not lifted, leaves us sceptical as to whether there be, behind the veil, any reality at all. The only way to lift the veil is to translate Christianity into the vernacular, or rather to re-translate it into the vernacular of its original presentation, to apply it to life and to the actual life of our own time and of ourselves, to make the dead phrases live again by developing their real, which is their present, meaning. But this means thinking—thinking ourselves into the essential spirit of Christianity, and thinking Christianity out into its consequences for our own life to-day. An abstract and unapplied Christianity is an unreal Christianity.

Is it that we are *afraid* to make the application ; that the vague, abstract, unapplied type is less embarrassing to us than the definite, concrete, applied type ; that we are unwilling to translate our Christianity into terms of the vernacular, lest we should find that its demands are too great and its ideal too exacting ? Montesquieu, speaking of the contempt of the white, and profoundly Christian, master for the negro slave, uses these bitter words : " We cannot conceive that God . . . has put a soul, and above all a good soul, in a body altogether black. . . . It is impossible for us to suppose that these people are men ; because if we supposed them to be men, we should begin to believe that we ourselves are not Christians." And though we—or our fathers—have long since learnt the courage to make this par-

ticular application of Christianity, we are still timid in making other applications, no less important and imperative. Nay, we have not yet learnt the courage to face the significance even of *this* application of it in all its length and breadth. Even here we content ourselves only too readily with abstractions and with phrases. We condemn slavery, and have ceased to practise it in its most literal and obvious form. But do we not still practise it in forms hardly, if at all, less revolting and hardly—I had almost said—less obvious? Have we realised the spiritual blight and desolation of the masses of the white population of our large cities—their real, if not literal, enslavement? Is not our continued and easy-going toleration of this state of things a sad commentary on the reality (or rather unreality) of our Christianity?

Yes, I believe we are afraid of the application of Christianity to life and conduct, and only too ready to content ourselves with compromise. But this lack of Christian courage—which is synonymous with lack of Christianity itself—is not, I believe, the only cause of our failure, in preaching and in practice, to make the application. Another cause, no less important, is a fundamental misconception as to the nature of the Christian ideal. There are many whose Christianity, such as it is, is entirely sincere and earnest, who are faithful to the only ideal they know, and whose failure to make the application arises from the belief that the Christian ideal has *no* application to the practical questions which occupy their daily life. In spirit, if not in literal fact, they live a separate life apart from the world—a life of “mystic sweet communion” with God and with Christ, and of quiet inoffensiveness towards their fellow-men. The mediæval ideal of saintship did not die with the Middle Ages, nor is it now confined to the Church

of Rome. The really Pharisaic spirit—not the spirit of hypocrisy but the spirit of religious separation—has had an obstinately persistent life in the Christian Church. It seemed to find a new sanction and a new starting-point in the Christian principle of unworldliness, which it misconceived as implying separation from the world. For by the “world” it understood (and understands) all ordinary human and secular interests and ambitions, all domestic and civic activities, all æsthetic and intellectual pursuits, the entire life of the ordinary man in the ordinary world. The spiritual or unworldly life thus comes to mean the separate life of the spirit in a spiritual world, the life of devotional contemplation, of prayer and praise, of worship and communion with the Father of our spirits. The ideal is negative and passive—essentially mystical—a flight from the world, a depreciation of ordinary duty, a surrender of the will to the supernatural influences of grace. I have myself heard a Free Church minister pray that “we might be delivered from an undue concern with the duties of this life”—as if devotion to duty (in its most secular and “worldly” form) could ever conflict with devotion to God; as if we had not the highest of all authority for making faithfulness to ordinary duty the measure of our religious attainment; as if Christianity were not a gospel of activity as well as of consolation, a gospel for this world as well as for all other worlds; as if the spiritual life were not just the ordinary life, in every aspect of it, spiritualised; as if fellowship with God were separable from fellowship with man; as if conduct were not, even from the religious point of view, the supreme and all-important thing.

We all recognise the demoralising influence of a religion which is divorced from morality, or which even

negatively depreciates morality by making it of secondary and not of supreme importance. We are familiar with the prophetic denunciations of a religion which consists in specific acts of worship rather than the righteousness of life. We know the disastrous results of an exaggerated estimate of the importance of intellectual orthodoxy on the one hand, and of a certain emotional condition on the other. From these false criteria of religion we must always return to the true Christian criterion: "By their fruits ye shall know them." "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."

The worldly life is the selfish life; the unworldly or spiritual life is the life of love or unselfishness. You cannot separate the interests of God from the interests of humanity: "He that loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen?" "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me." Did what? Just the simplest services of ordinary humanity—fed the hungry; gave the thirsty to drink; took in the stranger; clothed the naked; visited the sick and the prisoners. The Christian ideal is one of positive righteousness, of perfect altruism, of social service and devotion. Its social significance and its individual significance are inseparable. The individual cannot save himself without saving others—it is in saving others that he saves himself. He can only save his life by spending it in the service of others. The spiritual self is not the separate individual self but the social or unselfish self. And this self can find its life in every duty, however secular. It sees no distinction between

the sacred and the secular. To it the kingdom of the world has already become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ. But how difficult of attainment is this ideal. How apt are we to lose sight of it, to think we have attained it when we have hardly yet seen it. Here surely is the opportunity of the preacher—to hold up this ideal to us, to compel us to see it, to convince us of our shortcoming, to apply the ideal to our own lives, and to send us back to our duties, not as if he dismissed us from the temple of heavenly worship into a prosaic secular world, but rather as if he had opened to us the doors of the true temple, had transformed for us the world itself into the temple of God, and bidden us complete there the worship we had only just begun in the temple made by human hands.

There are many signs that we are beginning to wake up to the social significance of Christianity, its applications to the practical problems of our modern civilisation. We are beginning to be discontented with what is conventionally called "charity" and "beneficence" as a sufficient expression of the Christian spirit of brotherhood and social service. We are learning that the Christian ideal is not satisfied with gifts that cost us nothing, with a service in which there is no real element of sacrifice or of sympathy, which only plays on the surface of evil and suffering, and does not penetrate to their roots. Even the interesting—and in their way admirable—experiments of the Settlements and slum-workers are rather calculated to awaken us to the immensity and the difficulty of the social problem than to satisfy us as even an approximation to its true and permanent solution. The widespread interest awakened, especially in his own country, by Mr Sheldon's book '*In His Steps*,' is an indication of the earnestness with which

the problem of the social application of Christianity is felt by many minds, while the obvious crudities of the book are the best evidence of the difficulty of the problem. It is pretty clear that it is going to be *the* problem of the new century ; and the Church will fail most miserably in its duty if it fails to offer the guidance which, as the interpreter of the Christian ideal of society, it ought to be able to offer in the solution of this problem.

We have been accustomed to boast, both in this country and in America, of our political freedom, of the glory of our citizenship. But we are coming to realise how little the mere political suffrage may mean, how merely nominal citizenship may be. We are learning how far short we have come, with all our so-called "charity," of anything like a perfect justice between man and man ; how much yet remains for the State to do in the improvement of social conditions, if real and glaring injustice is to be removed. But, as you cannot separate the individual from the State, you cannot separate political from moral, and therefore from religious, interests ; and as the interests of social righteousness are above all distinctions of political party—political parties being divided only on the question of the method of securing these interests—the Church may surely stimulate and educate the conscience of its members in regard to their interests, without abandoning its spiritual function and entering the field of politics. It is for our statesmen and our politicians to discover the *method* of social justice ; but it is for our religious teachers to insist upon this application of the Christian ideal. The reason why they are so apt to fight shy of such questions is not, I believe, the fear of confounding ethics with politics so much as the fear of secularising religion. Even the question of Temperance is kept at

arm's length; and it is surely a pressing religious question, a pressing social question, especially in this country. When it is dealt with, the question of Temperance is apt to be treated as a question by itself, while in reality it is part of a much larger question. If we would get at the root of this terrible evil, we must connect it with the general conditions of life of the poor and labouring classes in our great cities, with the housing of the poor, and the conditions of labour. Here as elsewhere the true and radical cure must be positive, not negative. The only final and thorough-going prohibition of intemperance is the opening up of the possibility of a fuller and richer temperance; it is only the experience of the higher satisfactions that can effectually supplant the lower.

The application of the Christian ideal to the life of business and commerce is surely most important in this industrial age. The commercial life may appear, at first sight, to contradict the Christian ideal, dominated as it is, and must be, by the principle of competition and the desire of gain, which seem to be the antithesis of the Christian principle of self-sacrificing love. Yet if wealth be regarded—as surely it may be and ought to be—as a social opportunity, even the life of competition and of money-making may be halloed and Christianised. Here, again, we are in danger of a merely negative interpretation of the Christian ideal, of misconceiving its unworldliness as synonymous with flight from the world. But surely the commercial conscience needs to be educated; its standard of honour and of social responsibility should be far more elevated. The responsibility of employer to employed is far from being sufficiently realised. The labourer, too, needs to be taught what honest work is; how all work, however

apparently unimportant, acquires its proper dignity only when it is regarded as a service to society, and not merely as a return for wages. Even the luxury which seems inseparable from civilisation is neither to be regarded as a sheer contradiction of the Christian ideal, nor as necessarily beyond the criticism of that ideal. The lighter side of life, too, its amusement or play, its social intercourse and hospitalities, is too important to be excluded from the scope of Christian principles. Here, no less than in our most serious avocations, there is a double possibility—the possibility of worldliness or selfishness on the one hand, and of unworldliness or unselfishness on the other.

Not least important is the political application of Christianity. With the new sense of our imperial destiny there is awakening among us a new sense of the responsibilities of Empire ; with the new sense of our magnificent political opportunity there is awakening a new sense of the greatness and the difficulty of our duty as a nation. It has often been pointed out that the new democracy needs to be educated, if it is rightly to discharge its political functions ; and most of all is this true of our own country, whose system of government is really more democratic than that of any other, and whose imperial responsibilities are so much greater than those of any other country. But more important even than this intellectual education of the democracy is its moral and religious education, the education of the conscience of the people. Important, nay, essential, from the patriotic point of view—a point of view the legitimacy and nobility of which must be recognised,—this education of the conscience of the people is no less important from the point of view of our common humanity. The Empire owes duties not only to those



of its own kith and kin, not only to its own subjects, but to other nations also. It should mark out the pathway of the progress of the world—and we loyally believe it does so. But if it is to continue to do so—if it is to do so more and more efficiently—it must be because, with the growth of its great task, there comes a commensurate growth of the national conscience.

## IV

### THE CHRISTIAN ETHIC<sup>1</sup>

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**M**ATTHEW ARNOLD was accustomed to speak of Christianity—at least of the practical Christianity of the English middle class—as “Hebraism” or Puritanism. In his use of it this was partly a term of approval, partly of sad reproach; of approval in so far as it implied a serious moral outlook upon life, a sense of the tremendous importance of Conduct; of reproach in so far as it implied an exaggeration of the importance of Conduct and a forgetfulness of the value of “Culture, and the harmonious perfection of our whole being, and what we call totality.” And whatever we may think of his identification of Hebraism with Puritanism, and of the negative attitude to intellectual and æsthetic culture which he thus attributed to modern or Christian “Hebraism,” it cannot be denied that he was right in fastening upon the Hebraic or ethical element as characteristic of the Christian religion, or that from the point of Christian as of Hebrew religion, morality—Conduct—is the supremely important concern, in comparison with which the interests of Culture are without

<sup>1</sup> A Presidential Address to the Theological Society, New College, Edinburgh, October 1915.

value. It was with a true discernment that he traced the moral idealism of Christianity to its roots in the passion for Righteousness of the Hebrew people.

So far as the ethical element in his teaching is concerned, the Founder of Christianity may be said to have reaffirmed the Prophetic view of the meaning of Righteousness as against the inadequate conception of it entertained by the religious teachers of his own day. He insisted upon the distinction between morality and ritual or ceremonial observance, upon the infinite importance of the former and the comparative unimportance of the latter, and upon the fatal consequences of reversing this true order of importance. He affirmed the inner or spiritual character of Righteousness as a matter of will and motive and intention, not of the outward act or deed; a matter of character, and not merely of conduct. Finally, he constantly emphasised the social character of Righteousness, and repudiated as worthless a religious devotion which separated a man from his fellow-men and made him heedless of their claims upon his service. These three notes are characteristic no less of Hebrew Prophecy than of the teaching of Jesus. And if it be said that where the Prophets were thinking of the Nation, he was thinking of the individual, it must not be forgotten that their common ideal was the Kingdom of God, a perfect human society, whose coming meant that the divine Will should be done on earth as it is in heaven.

I suppose the late Professor Seeley, in 'Ecce Homo,' was the first to bring home to the English mind the essentially social character of the teaching of Jesus, in his memorable phrase "the enthusiasm of humanity." The gospel of social service, as the expression of that brotherly love which is implied in the common Fatherhood of God, has now become a commonplace of Chris-

tian thought. And yet are we not still too apt to miss the true scope and significance of that enthusiasm, and to think of the Church as a select society within the larger Society of Man? As Hatch says: "The basis of Christian society is not Christian but Roman and Stoical. . . . The transmutation is so complete that the modern question is not so much whether the ethics of the Sermon on the Mount are practicable as whether, if practicable, they would be desirable." Modern Christianity needs to be recalled to the moral claims of "a Christianity which will actually realise the brotherhood of men, the ideal of its first communities."<sup>1</sup> When we read the Gospels with clear and unprejudiced eyes, we must agree with Weinel that "the idea of a completely new world of love forces itself upon us, and we see the ideal of a new humanity as a family in which each serves the other, and all help one another to the best of their power. . . . Jesus saw a world full of need and of tears, and, with a glowing enthusiasm, he set his hope on another, and strove to realise it. Soon must come a time when the Spirit of God should prevail; soon must come a world in which the peacemakers should rule, where there should be no more pain, and where no one, discouraged by poverty, should cease to pray. He longed for another world; he worked for it; he desired to prepare men for it. He who would truly understand the thoughts of Jesus must commence with this Utopia. . . . Is this communism? No; it is less than communism, less than the organisation of society for the production, distribution, and consumption of wealth, that cares for all, and requires from all a fair share of work; and yet it is more, much more. It is a call for a revolution of the whole character, for a new

<sup>1</sup> Hatch, 'The Influence of Greek Ideas and Usages upon the Christian Church,' pp. 170, 353.

organisation of humanity, starting with the individual, and involving society as a whole." <sup>1</sup>

Yes, starting with the individual but not ending with the individual. It has been said by Bousset that the ethics of Jesus are "the ethics of a lofty individualism." <sup>2</sup> And Harnack has reiterated, in his lectures on "The Essence of Christianity," that it is concerned always with "God and the soul, the soul and its God." But the God of Christianity is the Father of all, and the soul that is alone capable of communion with him is the soul that loves and serves its fellows and finds its salvation in this loving service. So that, as Professor Bigg has remarked, "My soul and God" is rather the ultimate formula of Plotinus and the Stoics, whereas with the Christian it is "my soul, my brother's soul, and God." <sup>3</sup> Nor does the interest in my brother's soul exclude, it rather presupposes, interest in his bodily and material well-being, as we learn both from the example and from the teaching of Christ. His was a ministry to the bodily as well as to the spiritual needs of men; it was a ministry of Healing as well as of Preaching. In the parables of the Good Samaritan and of Dives and Lazarus, as well as in the picture of the Last Judgment, everything turns upon the faithfulness or unfaithfulness in the discharge of the simplest offices of brotherly kindness and Christian charity. And in one of his best-known sayings he lays down the fundamental principle or law of the new society, the law of social service: "Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. But so it shall not be among you; but whosoever will be great among you shall be your min-

<sup>1</sup> Weinel, 'Jesus,' pp. 273-7.

<sup>2</sup> Bousset, 'Jesus,' p. 149.

<sup>3</sup> 'The Church's Task under the Roman Empire,' Preface, p. xiv.

ister ; and whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many " (Mark x. 42 ff.). A society organised according to this principle would indeed be a new society. Such a social regeneration of the individual would be at the same time the regeneration of society. In this sense Christ was the greatest of all social reformers, the most Utopian of all social idealists.

On the other hand, Christ was not a social reformer in the sense that he organised, or even attempted to organise, the new society. He was not even an ecclesiastical reformer in the usual meaning of the term. He did not even begin to organise the Church as an institution. He left primitive Christianity to organise itself. He did not even legislate, in any detail, for the new society of which he was the founder. There is no warrant for Seeley's statement that "he proceeded to form [those who gathered round him] into a society, and to promulgate an elaborate legislation," and that "in doing so he assumed the part of a Moses." Still less did he attempt any reformation of the economic or social order. He differed from the ancient Hebrew Prophets in his attitude to the State. It never seems to have occurred to him that his moral principles could have any political application. In general, we may say that he left the application of his principles of conduct to their own circumstances to be determined by his followers themselves. He was no second Moses legislating for the details of conduct or of ritual. He enunciated not rules but principles ; his interest was in the spirit, not in the letter, alike of conduct and of worship.

It follows that *his* charity and mercy will not be our social service, that our enthusiasm of humanity must find other expressions than those which suggested them-

selves to him and to his earliest disciples. The spirit of Christianity must ever take to itself a new body in the new circumstances in which the changing generations find themselves. In Harnack's words, "primitive Christianity had to disappear in order that Christianity might remain." As Seeley has well said : "The obligation of philanthropy is for all ages ; but if we consider the particular modes of philanthropy which Christ prescribed to his followers, we shall find that they were suggested by the special conditions of that age. The same spirit of love which dictated them, working in this age upon the same problems, would find them utterly insufficient. No man who loves his kind can in these days rest content with waiting as a servant upon human misery, when it is in so many cases possible to anticipate and avert it. Prevention is better than cure, and it is now clear to all that a large part of human suffering is preventible by improved social arrangements. Charity will now, if it be genuine, fix upon this enterprise as greater, more widely and permanently beneficial, and therefore more Christian than the other. . . . The truth is that though the morality of Christ is theoretically perfect, and not subject, as the Mosaic morality was, to a further development, the practical morality of the first Christians has been in a great degree rendered obsolete by the later experience of mankind, which has taught us to hope more and undertake more for the happiness of our fellow-creatures. The command to care for the sick and suffering remains as divine as ever and as necessary as ever to be obeyed, but it has become, like the Decalogue, an elementary part of morality, early learnt, and not sufficient to satisfy the Christian enthusiasm." <sup>1</sup>

Further experience of the moral significance of material, economic, and social conditions has also laid upon us, as

<sup>1</sup> 'Ecce Homo,' ch. 17.

so instructed, a new obligation to do what in us lies for the improvement of these conditions. The modern social reformer is not inspired by concern for the mere material well-being of his fellows ; the deeper source of his inspiration is a concern for their moral and spiritual interests. As Seeley again says : " As it is the duty of Christians to study human well-being systematically with a view to philanthropy, so it is their duty with a view to edification to consider at large the conditions most favourable to goodness, and by what social arrangements temptations to vice may be reduced to the lowest point and goodness have the most and the most powerful motives." <sup>1</sup>

All this belongs to the education of the modern Christian conscience, to the new sense of social responsibility of the individual, as a member of the community, as a citizen of the State, for the economic, social, and political conditions which mean so much for the moral as well as the material well-being of mankind. " If we are in earnest," says Weinell, " with the teaching of Jesus regarding the ideal and the meaning of life, thousands of claims force themselves upon us to-day of which Jesus had no conception, and from his view of the world could not have had. . . . When we consider the social question in the spirit of Jesus, we are bound to think of the people as a whole and of the struggle of the masses for a life worthy of man, and for the possibility of development to the ' sonship of God.' " <sup>2</sup>

To look to the teaching of Christ for definite and detailed guidance in Christian duty is fatally to misunderstand the nature of that teaching, to treat as a code of rules what is really offered to us as a spirit, a principle, a point of view. " Only," says Harnack, " if the Gospel or the New Testament be regarded as a

<sup>1</sup> ' Ecce Homo,' ch. 18.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 282-3.



legal code, can social and political laws be found in it ; but we have no right to regard it thus, and any attempt to do so will speedily end in failure. It is unauthorised, because our faith is the religion of liberty, and its duties are specially imposed upon you, and upon me, and upon every age, as an individual problem for each to solve. . . . An age in which capital was almost always hoarded in a useless way, as a dead thing, cannot be compared with an age in which it is the greatest economic power ; and an age which believed the end of the world to be approaching is not to be compared with one which recognises as sacred the duty of working for the future.”<sup>1</sup> And if we are still inclined to regret the absence of such detailed and definite guidance as to present duty from the teaching of Jesus, Herrmann well reminds us that “the one great benefit conferred upon us by the historical study of the Gospels is the way they help us to get rid of such longings and regrets. They show us why guidance of this sort cannot possibly be found in the words of Jesus.”<sup>2</sup> But if we are to be true to the spirit of his teaching, we must make the applications to our own conditions for ourselves. The Christian morality would long ago have become obsolete if it had consisted of definite moral rules. If it was to remain adequate to the interpretation of the life of later times, it must content itself with the inculcation of a spirit, an attitude of the will ; and the spirit and attitude of Jesus can never become obsolete. In this sense, but only in this sense, he will always be the Conscience of his followers.

But is not the spirit and the point of view of Christianity—of the Christianity of Jesus—essentially un-ethical or supra-ethical, religious and mystical rather than ethical ? Is not its point of view eschatological,

<sup>1</sup> ‘The Social Gospel’ (Crown Theological Library), p. 13.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 176.

and is not its ethic, therefore, necessarily a merely interim ethic, having to do only with the concerns of the brief interval which is to elapse before the Parousia, whose new order, that of the Kingdom of God, will for ever supersede the present order of things and render obsolete all the maxims of conduct which presupposed that order of things? Hence the lack of interest in social, economic, and political questions, the failure to apply the principles of conduct to the details of ordinary life in this world. Hence, too, the absence of any effort to organise the Christian community, the absence of any interest in its future history and destiny. Neither the State nor the Church as an earthly society had, in the eyes of Jesus, a future; within his own generation their end was due. The clearest and most unambiguous statement of this view which I know is that of the late Father Tyrrell in 'Christianity at the Cross-roads.' It is, he says, the view which Catholic Modernism accepts as the truly historical one, as against the distortion of the historical facts offered by such a representative of Protestant Liberalism as Harnack: "Jesus did not come to reveal a new ethics of this life, but the speedy advent of a new world in which ethics would be superseded. . . . The morality of Jesus was for this life, not for the next—the passing condition, not the abiding substance of blessedness. Nothing is original in the righteousness preached by Jesus. . . . It represents but the highest dictates of man's purified heart and conscience. Much, however, is coloured by the immediate expectation of the end, and is applicable only to such an emergency. In such a crisis it was not worth while to assert a thousand claims that, in normal circumstances, could not be inculpably neglected. There was only time to seek the Kingdom of God in which all such losses would be made good." He contrasts accordingly "the inci-

dental moralism" of the Gospel with "the central apocalyptic." "Christianity is subordinately and inclusively a religion of righteousness." "Catholic Modernism, . . . acknowledges that the apocalyptic elements of Christianity are essential and not accidental, the moral elements subordinate and not principal."<sup>1</sup>

But whatever may be the true importance of the eschatological element in the religion of Jesus, there seems no warrant for the statement that in his eyes morality is of subordinate importance, and that his interest in it is merely incidental, or for the statement that his moral teaching is, to any important extent, coloured by his apocalyptic expectations. The impression which one gets from the Gospel accounts of that teaching is that for him morality has an absolute and eternal, not merely a relative and provisional, importance and value. His conception of God is profoundly ethical, and the life to which he calls his followers is that of a perfect obedience to the Father's will; the ideal he sets before them is nothing less or other than that moral perfection which is already realised in God, and the realisation of which by them is found in brotherly love and active social service. And if the swift coming of the Kingdom is referred to in connection with morality at all, it is only as a reminder of the tremendous issues which depend upon faithfulness or unfaithfulness in the discharge of present duty. But in the main the moral teaching is not influenced in any way by the eschatology. As Dobschütz says: "We cannot say that this view materially influenced his ethics. . . . If we eliminate his eschatological ideas, his ethics remain unchanged. Take, for example, the parable of the Good Samaritan and of the Prodigal Son. The great commandments of love and of self-

<sup>1</sup> 'Christianity at the Cross-roads,' pp. 51, 93.

renunciation are in no way suggestive of an 'interim ethics,' but of a definite absolute system of ethics. . . . It means doing violence to Jesus's moral teaching, if this is subordinated to his announcement of the approaching end in the way of being only an *Interimsethik*."<sup>1</sup> At most, the effect of the eschatological point of view which he shared with his contemporaries upon the moral teaching of Jesus is the negative one, that, co-operating with other influences, such as his preoccupation with the problem of religion and the nature of the circumstances of his people in that age, it led him to ignore certain aspects of morality which have forced themselves upon the attention of later ages. But even here the result is not any obscuration of the essential nature of morality. As Professor Lake has finely expressed it: "The effect of that expectation was to hide almost entirely the more obvious duties of a 'world-affirming ethics' in daily life, but in the darkness thus induced some of the eternal lights shone out, as the stars during an eclipse."<sup>2</sup> May we not add that the concentration upon the essential and eternal elements of the moral life was made possible by the exclusion of the temporary and evanescent forms of that life?

Finally, we must not fail to notice what Dobschütz calls the "transmutation" of the current eschatological ideas as they passed through the mind of Jesus, their transmutation from an external and miraculous to an inner and spiritual form, so that, while he still looked to God to bring about, shortly and marvellously, the consummation of the Kingdom, he felt himself and his followers called upon not merely to prepare for its coming, but, in a very real sense, to anticipate its coming. "Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in

<sup>1</sup> 'Eschatology of the Gospels,' pp. 12-14, 156.

<sup>2</sup> 'The Stewardship of Faith,' p. 34.

heaven. . . . Behold, the kingdom of God is among you (or within you)." Even Schweitzer sees in the apocalyptic literature of the time "the persistent traces of this ethical deepening of apocalyptic. . . . The eschatology of the time of Jesus shows the influence of the eschatology of the ancient prophets in a way which is not paralleled either before or after. . . . In place of the legal righteousness, which, since the return from the exile, had formed the link of connection between the present and the future, we find the prophetic ethic, the demand for a general repentance, even in the case of the Baptist. . . . The difficulty is, indeed, consciously felt of combining the two eschatologies, and bringing the prophetic within the Danielic." "But it is inadequate to speak of a synthesis of the two eschatologies. What has happened is nothing less than the remoulding, the elevation, of the Daniel-Enoch apocalyptic by the spirit and conceptions belonging to the ancient prophetic hope."<sup>1</sup>

It may well be that for Jesus religion is more than morality. That question does not concern us in the present discussion. What does concern us is to note that the apocalyptic ideas which form part of his religious consciousness do not lead either to the depreciation of morality or to a transcendental or mystical, ascetic or other-worldly, interpretation of morality itself. His appreciation of morality, his interpretation of its nature, rank him as the successor of the ancient Hebrew prophets, as the Founder or Re-founder of ethical religion, rather than a religious or apocalyptic moralist.

But we are not left to gather the nature of Christ's moral teaching merely from the record of that teaching which is contained in the Gospels. We have the great advantage of having a record, in large part earlier than

<sup>1</sup> 'The Quest of the Historical Jesus,' p. 367.

the earliest of the Gospels, of the interpretation which the first disciples put upon the Master's teaching, and of the expression which this interpretation found in the life of the earliest Christian communities. That record is an invaluable commentary upon the teaching, a revelation of what Christianity meant to those who stood nearest to the source, and who were compelled to translate into more practical and systematic form the teaching of Jesus about daily duty. The Gospels, read in the light of the Epistles, leave us in no doubt as to the ethical, practical, and social significance of primitive Christianity.

Again and again these earliest Christian communities are commended for their practice of the ordinary virtues, reproved for their lapses from the moral standard of the Gospel to the lower level of heathen vice, warned to beware of being seduced into either a Jewish exaggeration of the importance of rules and ceremonies, or into the practice of a Greek asceticism, which is no less contrary to the ethical spirit of Christianity as these writers understand it. The Christian life is essentially a "walk," a "conversation," a type of conduct and character, to be realised in this present world, in the discharge of ordinary duty. It is a dying to the flesh and a living to the spirit; a dying to sin and a living to righteousness. The two lives between which a man must choose are repeatedly pictured; the cardinal sins and the cardinal virtues are repeatedly enumerated. These recent converts to the new faith have to be constantly reminded of the cleft that separates the Christian from the pagan life, lest they forget the difference which Christ has made. The thought of the Parousia is always present in the background; but its presence seems only to accentuate the sense of the critical importance of the moral alternative.

Take the terrible catalogue of heathen vices in the first chapter of the Letter to the Romans. "And as they disdained to keep God in their knowledge, God gave them up to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not fitting; being filled with all iniquity, wickedness, covetousness, and malice; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, and malignity; slanderers, defamers, hateful to God, insolent, haughty, boastful, devisers of evil, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, unmerciful. . . . And we know that the doom of God falls justly upon those who practise such things. And dost thou imagine, O man who judgest them that practise such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the doom of God? . . . For not the hearers of law shall be just before God, but the doers of law shall be justified."<sup>1</sup> Similarly, after reproving the Corinthians for going to law against one another, the apostle asks: "Why not rather be wronged? Why not rather be defrauded? Instead of which you yourselves inflict wrong and practise fraud, and that upon your brothers. What! do you not know that unjust men shall not inherit the reign of God? Be not misled: neither fornicators nor idolaters nor adulterers nor voluptuaries nor sodomites nor thieves nor covetous people nor drunkards nor revilers nor extortioners shall inherit the reign of God. And such creatures some of you were; but you washed yourselves, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God. . . . What! do you not know that your body is a sanctuary of the holy Spirit which is in you, which you have from God? And you are not your own, you were bought with a price; then honour God in your body."

<sup>1</sup> Moffatt's translation is mainly followed.

Take the parallel tables of the works of the flesh and of the Spirit in the Letter to the Galatians: "Now the works of the flesh are obvious. . . . I tell you beforehand, as I already told you beforehand, that those who practise such things shall not inherit the reign of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control: against such things there is no law. And those who are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and lusts. If we live by the Spirit, by the Spirit let us walk." The two lives are similarly contrasted in the Letter to the Colossians: "Put then to death the members that are on the earth. . . . In them at one time you also walked, when you lived in them. But now do you also put them all away: anger, passion, malice, slander, foul talk from your mouth; lie not one to another—seeing that you stripped off the old man with his doings and put on the new man, who is ever being renewed to full knowledge. . . . Put on, therefore, as God's chosen, . . . a disposition of tender mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, long-suffering. Bear with one another and forgive each other, if any person has a complaint against any one else, even as the Lord also forgave you, so too do you forgive. Over and above all this, put on love, for love is the bond that makes perfection."

In the Letter to the Ephesians the same contrast is drawn, and the same emphasis is laid on the elementary social virtues: "Wherefore put away falsehood . . . for we are members one of another. . . . Let not the sun set upon your rage, and give the devil no chance. Let the thief no longer steal; rather let him labour with his hands at honest work, that he may have something to give to the needy. Let no foul speech issue from your mouth, but only such as is good for improving



the occasion, that it may bring profit to the hearers. . . . Let all bitterness and passion and anger and clamour and slander be put away from you, with all malice. And show yourselves kind to one another, compassionate, forgiving each other even as God also in Christ forgave you. Be, then, imitators of God, as beloved children ; and walk in love even as Christ also loved us and gave himself up for us to God." The summary of Christian virtue in Philippians must be given in the familiar words of the Authorised Version : " Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report ; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

That the Christian life, as the early Christians understood it, is one of righteousness is evident from these and many other passages which might be quoted. That it consists in a social service which is the expression of the Christian spirit of brotherly love is no less emphatically insisted upon. " In love serve one another, for the whole law is fulfilled in one word, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. . . . Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal." The main burden of the later message of I. John is the same identification of Christianity with righteousness and of righteousness with loving service of others. " He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. . . . If any one says, I love God, and yet hates his brother, he is a liar ; for he who loves not his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen. And we have this commandment from him, That he who loves God loves his brother also.

. . . For this is the message that you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. . . . We know that we have passed from death into life, because we love the brethren. . . . But whoever has this world's goods, and observes his brother in need, and yet shuts up his compassion from him, how doth the love of God abide in him? Little children, let us not love with word, or with the tongue, but in deed and in truth."

It is what we should expect that St Paul should apply his system-loving mind, not merely to the construction of the system of Christian theology but also to the detailed application of its moral principles to daily practice. And we find him making the application to the duties of family life—to the relation of husband and wife, of parents and children, of masters and slaves, and to civil and industrial life. Let us take the last two applications. "There is no power but of God, and the powers that be are ordained of God." Similarly the writer of the First Epistle of Peter: "Be subject to every institution of man for the Lord's sake, either to the king as pre-eminent, or to governors as those who are sent by him for the punishment of wrong-doers and for praise to those who do what is right . . . as free men, yet not employing freedom to veil wickedness, but as God's slaves." As to the duty of the individual to support himself by useful work, St Paul is clear and emphatic in his teaching. He charges the Thessalonians "in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to avoid every brother whose walk is irregular and not after the tradition received from us. You know yourselves how you ought to imitate us. We did not lead an irregular life among you, nor did we eat bread at any man's hand for nothing, but with labour and toil we worked night and day, so as to be no burden to any of you. It was

not that we lacked the right ; it was simply to set ourselves as a pattern for you to imitate. We gave you this charge even when we were with you, 'If any man will not work, neither let him eat.' Whereas we hear of some who are leading an irregular life among you, not busy, but busybodies. Such people we charge and beseech in the Lord Jesus to work quietly and eat their own bread."

Here I must conclude this brief examination of the evidence as to the ethical teaching of Christianity. Had your time and my knowledge permitted, it would have been instructive to follow it further into the writings of the Apologists and the Early Fathers, and even into the later history of the Church. But I have perhaps done enough if I have called your attention to a subject of crucial interest and importance. You can follow it out for yourselves. My purpose has not been altogether an unpractical one. For it is surely of the utmost importance that you, as future preachers of the Gospel, should have a right appreciation of the stress which it lays upon morality, and a right understanding of its interpretation of goodness, so that in your preaching you should insist not only upon moral *reality* but, as the condition of moral reality, upon the application of the moral principles of Christianity to the conditions, especially the social conditions, of your own time. The true Preacher will always be the Prophet, and the Prophet's message is always a message for his own time. I think we are sometimes too much afraid of confounding the office of the Preacher with that of the politician. The ancient Hebrew Prophets knew no such fear. And surely in these days the nations have dire need of the Christian ethic. It is the only thing that will bring peace to the warring nations. We need not depreciate Patriotism ; we are seeing what a power it can be

in a man's life, and to what splendid Christian service and self-sacrifice it can inspire him. But if it is to be well with the nations, they must listen to the voice of the Christian ethic, which forbids them to put Patriotism above Humanity, or to forget that in the Kingdom of God there is neither Greek nor Jew, but only the children of the one heavenly Father.

## V

### ON CERTAIN ALLEGED DEFECTS IN THE CHRISTIAN MORALITY<sup>1</sup>

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IT has been customary, especially in an apologetic interest, to accentuate the difference between the ethics of Christianity and those of Paganism, to insist upon the originality of the ethical point of view of Christianity and its reversal of all the old Pagan moral values. Greek virtues are, it has been roundly contended, from the new point of view occupied by Christianity, only "splendid vices." Missing, as it did, the secret of goodness, the best moral insight of the ancient world was blind to the essential distinction between virtue and vice ; it remained, at best, within the world of moral appearance, and never penetrated to that of moral reality. The revelation of the true nature of goodness in the life and teaching of Christ has therefore meant, on the whole, the reversal of all earlier and non-Christian moral judgments, the transvaluation of all Pagan moral values. And if we find anticipations of Christian morality among the ancient Greeks and

<sup>1</sup> Murtle Lecture, delivered in the University of Aberdeen on January 20, 1907.

Romans or among other races, these have been regarded as simply happy guesses at ethical truth, unrelated, or related only by contradiction, to the rest of their ethical principles—guesses which waited for their confirmation and explanation in the Christian moral system.

It was inevitable that such a line of argument should provoke a counter-argument, proceeding on the same lines, against Christianity as an ethical system; that the very originality or novelty of the ethical point of view attributed to it, its supposed effort to invalidate the moral judgments of the Pagan world, and to reverse all moral judgments other than its own, should lead to its condemnation as lacking the insight which led the Pagan mind to these judgments, and as inimical to the further progress of the race along the lines of the splendid ancient civilisations. As a recent writer has truly said: "The classes who formerly busied themselves with the criticism of Christianity on its historical side are now interesting themselves in the criticism of it from another side. A generation is growing up which is calling *ethical* Christianity into question just as two preceding generations called in question *historical* Christianity. . . . The difficulty which young men today have in accepting Christianity is not intellectual but moral."<sup>1</sup> The re-affirmation of the Pagan, as against the Christian, point of view is, as this writer frankly confesses, the re-affirmation of a kind of ethical naturalism as against the ethical supernaturalism or spiritualism of Christianity. "The ideal which all healthy nations and all healthy individual men (if they could impartially analyse their ideals) set before themselves, is not the spiritual man, but what I may call the best kind of natural man."<sup>2</sup> "Let us not be ashamed to acknowledge that by which we really live. Let us have done with pre-

<sup>1</sup> Garrod, 'Religion of all Good Men,' Preface.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 141.

tence. Let us cease to call ourselves Christians when we do not follow Christ. Let us cease attempting to reduce Christianity to a metaphor and to make the words of Christ mean to us what they never meant to him.”<sup>1</sup> Let us substitute for the medley of Christianity and Paganism which gets itself accepted as “Christianity” the Christianity of Christ himself and of the primitive Christians, and we shall see immediately the incongruity between our profession and our practice, and acknowledge not only the impossibility, but the undesirability, of the practice of the Christian morality by the modern world.

The condemnation of the Christian ideal proceeds upon three main grounds. First, that ideal denies, it is alleged, the value of interests which must always possess value for the healthy-minded man, those interests which it sums up under the terms the “world” and the “flesh.” In other words, it is merely a negative or ascetic ideal, and cannot therefore be the true ideal for such a being as man in such a world as this. Its very presupposition is that this world passeth away, and that man’s true life lies in a future which imparts to this life the only value which it can possess for the spiritual man. Secondly, it not merely invalidates the instincts and interests of the healthy-minded man, and the “goods” which consist in the satisfaction of these natural desires; it further degrades and enslaves the human spirit itself, and paralyses, instead of stimulating, its highest powers. Its morality is not merely lacking in virility and strength, it destroys the virile qualities in human nature, and substitutes servility and cowardice for the masterfulness and courage which are inseparable from strength of purpose and self-respect. It is therefore the enemy of progress, which is the result of the

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 154; cf. ‘Hibbert Journal,’ April 1905.

struggle of the strong with the weak, of the fit with the unfit, and of the victory of the former over the latter. Still a third ground of condemnation of the Christian morality is found in its alleged anti-social tendencies, the impossibility of constructing any system of social order in accordance with its principles. While the morality of the Pagan world was essentially political, and resulted from a reflective analysis of the conditions of social and political existence, Christianity, it is contended, is essentially anti-political, and its fundamental principle of the non-resistance of evil implies the dissolution of the State. Accordingly we find Tolstoy arguing that the entire course of civilisation has been a mistake, the result of disloyalty to the Christian ideal of life, and that the State itself is, and must ever be, a Pagan and anti-Christian institution. Let us be true to the Christian ideal, he urges, and we shall have no use for the State ; the civic virtues will give place to their Christian opposites.

Now the real question raised for us by the attack upon the Christian morality is the "previous question" whether the morality attacked is, or is not, the Christian morality. For we cannot deny that the morality thus represented as the Christian morality is, in the main, justly condemned on the grounds alleged. A morality which invalidates human nature and all its judgments of good, which fails to give a positive interpretation of the interests of the present life, is itself so far invalidated. The true morality must recognise the essential dignity of human nature and guard jealously the self-respect of the good man ; a morality which humiliates and degrades man is justly condemned. And finally, a moral ideal which invalidates and, if practised, would destroy the State, is obviously not merely an impracticable ideal for a political being like man, but is so



far inadequate and misleading; a morality which regards the State as simply the enemy of goodness is no less in error than a morality which regards the world and the flesh in the same light, or which insults the dignity of human nature and undermines the self-respect of the moral being. The questions raised for us, therefore, by this criticism of the Christian morality are : (1) Whether that morality is essentially negative and merely ascetic ; (2) whether it degrades human nature and destroys self-respect, and is therefore the foe of progress ; (3) whether it is essentially anarchistic and anti-political in its spirit and tendency.

(1) In the first place, then, we must distinguish carefully between the asceticism which is an essential element in Christian morality and the asceticism of the Mystic or of the Monk. The latter counsels withdrawal from the life of the world—that is, from the avocations and interests of the ordinary man and of this life, because it holds that these are two alternative lives between which we must make our choice—the worldly and the unworldly life, and that the only possibility of living the unworldly life is to withdraw from the life of the world. The antithesis between the Flesh and the Spirit, between the practical and the contemplative life, is absolute ; the one must be exchanged for the other. Now the Christian ideal too is an unworldly life, the victory of the Spirit over the Flesh, the definite choice of the Kingdom of God and the rejection of the kingdom of the world. But Christianity sees no essential evil in the earthly life, in the practical pursuit of natural satisfaction as such. “The Son of Man came eating and drinking.” “Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things”—of food and raiment and the provision of all the other needs of the natural life. Christ did not

summon His followers to a life in the wilderness, like the Baptist; He never counselled them to withdraw from the world of their ordinary avocations. They were to live the unworldly life *in the world*, to realise his ideal of life in the ordinary and not in any extraordinary life. The asceticism which he inculcates is an asceticism of the spirit and not of the outward conduct. As it is only our preference of external and material to spiritual and internal goods—our making of what ought to be merely means to higher ends into ends-in-themselves—that constitutes the evil of earthly goods, so the only asceticism to which we are called by Christ is that which consists in the subordination of instrumental to final goods, of means to ends, in the recognition that the only good which has absolute or unconditional value is the good of the spirit itself, or righteousness. “Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things”—all the other goods, in so far as they are truly good, that is, the means to the highest good—“shall be added unto you.”

Moreover, the unworldly life is synonymous with the unselfish life; the great commandment, the ultimate law of the good life, is Love. And the expression of love is service, and the first opportunity of service is found in ministry to the earthly needs of our fellows. The ministry of Christ himself was a ministry of healing as well as a ministry of preaching, and it was in the first place a ministry of healing. The constant opportunity of the spirit, therefore, he teaches, will be found in the ministry to the earthly needs of our fellows. To those who urge, “Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name done many wonderful works?” he will say at the last, “I never knew you.” The first and essential condition of his approval is to love our neighbour as ourselves, to see that no one to whose

wants we can minister lacks anything which it lies in our power to supply. Even, therefore, if there were any danger, in the Christian ideal, of a tendency towards an asceticism of the mystic or monastic type—which I contend there is not—such a tendency would be corrected by the characteristic altruism, and resulting practicalism, of that ideal.

Yet it may still be urged that, although it may be true that Christ did not, in so many words, counsel the practice of asceticism, the characteristic spirit of his teaching is that of aloofness from the ordinary secular interests and avocations of human life; that he has no sympathy with civilisation, with the secular and industrial activities which promote it, or with the culture of the ideal life, whether of science or of art, in which it really consists; that his exclusive interest in righteousness is a survival of the narrowness of outlook, the unintellectuality and insensibility to the beautiful which characterised the Hebrew mind; and that if we would be perfect, we must add to the Hebrew interest in righteousness the Greek interest in the true and the beautiful, as well as the Teutonic enthusiasm for action and practical achievement.

Now the general and sufficient answer to such a criticism of the Christian ideal of life is simply that, by the very nature of the case, the teaching of Christ is limited to what he regards as the essential and all-important element in the life of man—the essential and all-important, but not, therefore, the exclusive interest of that life. His teaching has nothing to do with civilisation, with culture, with work or industry as such. He is so preoccupied with the moral and religious interest that he almost seems to treat it as if it existed alone and apart from these other interests. His point of view is that of the Prophet, and that of the Prophet of the

Kingdom in the new spiritual sense. By adopting that point of view, and refusing to abandon it even for a moment, he does affirm the supreme importance of the moral and religious interest: so transcendent is its importance that no other interest, however important and worthy in itself, can be allowed to compete with it. But this does not imply that, in their own place, when duly, that is, utterly subordinated to the religious interest, these other interests are invalidated. In righteousness he sees the supreme, but not the only good. If I may say so, Christ betrays the inevitable limitation of view of the specialist; his attention is so preoccupied with the problem of righteousness, with his own peculiar problem, that he does ignore the other problems of human life, the problems of civilisation, of industrial activity, and of culture. But to ignore these problems is not to deny that they exist, and that they demand their solution. Only, the problem of righteousness must be solved *first*, and its solution will govern that of the others. His depreciation of what we may call, by contrast with the religious, the secular interests of life is, in short, a relative, not an absolute, depreciation.

The view that he not merely subordinated but condemned the industrial life, is the result of an unintelligent reading of such sayings as, "Take no thought for the morrow, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, or wherewithal ye shall be clothed," as if he had forbidden ordinary prudence and concern with the means of livelihood. All that he does condemn is such an anxious care for our material well-being as means distrust of the fatherly goodness of God, who feeds the birds of the air and clothes the lilies of the field and cannot forget the needs of his children. What he condemns is such a preoccupation with the problem of material well-being as would distract the mind from

the problem of spiritual well-being. In the pursuit of wealth he sees the great temptation for the human soul ; the spirit of cupidity is the opposite of the spirit of the Kingdom. "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." "What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul"—his own proper life ?

And must we not still admit that his standard is the true one by which to measure the value of material goods, and even of that entire system of material goods which we call "civilisation" ? These goods have, after all, only an instrumental value, as means to spiritual good ; as soon as material comfort is made an end in itself, it not only loses all its values, but becomes an evil. Civilisation is not an unmixed blessing, as history and our own experience are constantly teaching us ; it brings its own peculiar temptations with it.

And even the life of culture itself, intellectual and æsthetic, to which the Greeks so wisely subordinated the practical and industrial life, must be subordinated, in its own interest as well as in the interest of the higher life whose minister it really is, to the ethical and religious life. Not in science, nor in art, after all, but in morality, in conduct, is to be found the true life even of the artist and of the man of science. To this extent it is necessary still to Hebraise.

The only real opposition, then, is between the Christian morality and a morality of mere naturalism, which finds the measure of good in the satisfaction of natural desires or animal needs, on the one hand, or an intellectualism or æstheticism of the Greek type, which exalts the scientific and æsthetic interests above the moral or practical, on the other. The Christian ideal prescribes no ascetic rule of life, it sees spiritual possibilities in all the natural interests of human life ; and while it may ignore many problems which we are called

upon to solve, while it may ignore the secular life as such, it is yet so far from invalidating that life that it postulates it as the material, so to speak, of the higher life in which alone its real interest lies.

(2) The second aspect of the Christian reversal of Pagan moral values upon which criticism has fastened is that which we may call its social aspect, and it is obviously a no less important aspect of the Christian morality than the one which we have been so far considering. The Christian morality, as we have seen, is essentially altruistic; the sacrifice of the lower or animal to the higher or human self is at the same time the sacrifice of the self for others. In this sense also it is insisted that we must lose our life if we would find it, and die if we would live.

It is here, in the social reference, that the difference and opposition between the Christian and the Pagan point of view makes itself most acutely felt. It means a changed attitude towards our fellows, and the practical consequences of such a change of social attitude have been historically momentous. These consequences are to be seen not so much in the new philanthropy, the new effort to alleviate the sufferings and misfortunes of the masses of mankind, as in the new democratic feeling for these masses of mankind, the new conception of social duty. The exchange of the egoistic for the altruistic point of view implies a remarkable change of moral values—a changed *measure* of moral values. A new measure of moral greatness is implied: for the greatness of mastery there is substituted the greatness of service. “Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief

among you, let him be your servant ; even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." A man's greatness is to be measured not by the services which he can command, but by the services which he is able to render : " It is more blessed to give than to receive." The real opportunity of good is to be found in the opportunity of service ; a man is not to think of others as existing for him, but of himself as existing for others. It is a new note, unheard in the highest ethical reflection of the Greeks, or only faintly heard in the claim of the State upon the citizen ; but the Greek State was essentially aristocratic, the many existed—lived and toiled and died—for the few, the ungifted many for the gifted few. But Christ says that the highest must serve the lowest, that the highest is simply he who most completely serves. And the essence of all service is self-forgetfulness, self-sacrifice, the brotherly love that takes no thought for itself but only for others. Its essential spirit is the spirit of humility, of lowly-mindedness, the opposite of the " high-mindedness " of the Greeks.

But such an ideal, it is contended, is fatal to all progress. Sacrificing the few to the many, it sacrifices excellence and distinction to mediocrity. With its praise of lowly-mindedness and service it discourages the true heroic type, and substitutes for it an anæmic, unvirile, servile type of manhood. It is the morality of the slave, and is " prompted by the self-protective and self-preservative instinct of degenerating life." It is the ingenious means by which the weak avenge themselves upon the strong, the slaves upon their masters. As soon as the masters come to believe that the mastery is wrong and service noble, their mastery is gone ; the Christianising of Rome meant her conquest by Judæa. The victory of the weak, of the unfit to live, means the

degeneration of the race, the sacrifice of the interests of the future to those of the present, the conquest of the will to live by the will *not* to live.

The answer to the question of the relative validity of Christian and Pagan moral values must depend once more upon our answer to the previous question of the value of life itself, what makes life worth living, or which type of life is best worth living. "Degeneration"—from what type? Degeneration from the animal type may well be progression towards the human type. The will not to live the merely animal life may well be identical with the will to live the true life of man. Nietzsche's condemnation of the Christian ideal is in terms of a standard of value which Christianity itself has antiquated and rendered obsolete, nay, which even Paganism had already superseded. His condemnation of the Christian morality is in reality a condemnation of morality itself, an assertion of nature against morality, of the animal against the man. His ideal is that of sheer power, unrestrained by any considerations of moral obligation. He delights to speak of himself as an "Immoralist," and of his point of view as one "beyond good and evil."

And yet beneath all the paradox and extravagance of his language there is an important truth in Nietzsche's interpretation of the significance of the new altruism of the Christian morality; of the emancipation of the slave, the acceptance of the democratic ideal in place of the aristocratic ideal of Paganism, as its essential implications. So far from its being a servile morality, it has proved itself the moral inspiration of all movements for the emancipation of the enslaved masses of mankind. But this very fact raises the other question whether its influence has not been, and must not always be, on the side of mediocrity rather than of excellence



and distinction ; whether, in the interest of the highest type of manhood, it is not necessary to adopt the ancient aristocratic point of view, and subordinate the interests of the many to those of the few, rather than conversely. The answer is that while the Christian ideal is certainly democratic, breaking down the distinction between the many and the few, it is just for this reason aristocratic in the true sense. So far from levelling down to a dull mediocrity, it levels up to the standard of the highest excellence. It sees, in *all*, the possibilities which the best Pagan insight discovered only in the few. It sees in each son of man, however unfortunate or degraded, a possible son of God, in each soul or self a value commensurate with this high calling and possibility. For the Pagan contempt for the mass of toilers it substitutes a deep reverence for their potential greatness ; it raises all, it degrades none. How should a religion degrade man, or cause him to forfeit his self-respect, which tells him that his relation to God is that of a son to a Father, and his relation to his fellow-men that of members of a common family ? How should it sap the springs of the more virile qualities when it calls upon its disciples to sacrifice life itself for righteousness and to rejoice when they are counted worthy to suffer for the Kingdom's sake ? Is not the courage of the martyr at least equal to that of the soldier ? Has not Christian virtue proved itself possessed of heroic quality ?

And as for the survival of the unfit or the less fit, the perpetuation by Christian effort of the weaker and less healthy type, it is only from the standpoint of a physiological naturalism like that of Nietzsche that such an objection can be raised. Doubtless there is a measure of truth in the criticism of the actual altruism of so-called Christian society, which has too often contented itself with merely palliative efforts which have resulted

in the further development of the evil thus superficially treated, instead of attacking its causes and eradicating it. The physiological point of view has its own relative validity, even in ethics. But it is not to be confused with the ethical point of view. Health is one of the goods of human life, and a condition of many more ; but it is not itself the Good. From the ethical point of view the fitness or worthiness of the individual to live is not to be measured in terms of his physical fitness or physiological efficiency, but in terms of his ethical fitness, the ethical possibilities of his life. And surely Christianity has given us the true criterion of the life of the individual, as well as the true method of dealing with the physically and morally degenerate, when it insists upon the existence of the highest ethical possibilities not merely in the physically weakest but even in the morally most depraved.

(3) The discussion of the third objection to the Christian morality has been to a certain extent anticipated by that of the first. It is objected that, in spite of its altruistic spirit, that morality is distinctly anti-social in its actual influence upon conduct, since it not only depreciates and ignores the importance of the State, which is the all-inclusive social institution and the presupposition of all social order and well-being, but by its insistence upon the principle of love as against that of force, of forgiveness and non-resistance of evil, sets itself in opposition to the State, which is founded on force and exists for the maintenance of justice and the punishment of evil. Now it cannot be questioned that Christ intended to substitute a new humanitarianism for the older exclusive patriotism of the Greek and Hebrew world ; interest in the Kingdom of God, which is the kingdom of humanity, for interest in one's own city or State ; the spirit of fraternity for the spirit of citizen-

ship. If God is the Father of all men, then it follows that membership in the Kingdom of God is open to all men, and that in every member of the human race the Christian recognises the claim of a common brotherhood. The good citizen is no longer to be identified with the good man; the good man is a citizen of the world, no less truly from the Christian than from the Stoic point of view. But, as we have already seen, this subordination of the political to the ethical point of view does not necessarily imply the invalidating of the former, any more than the subordination of the economic or (in general) the secular to the ethical and religious interest implies the denial that the economic and secular interests have their legitimate place in the life of the good man. The fact that Christ does not concern himself with political or economic questions, with questions of the organisation of social life, is simply the inevitable result of his preoccupation with the supreme question of the nature of goodness itself, of his conviction of the supreme importance of this question and the comparative unimportance of all other questions. Doubtless, too, his lack of interest in the State is, in part, to be accounted for by the pettiness and hopelessness of Jewish politics in his time—it is a case of the fulfilment of Plato's dream of a great nature born to citizenship of a petty State whose politics cannot distract his mind from its higher task—as well as by his conviction that the political order itself—the entire temporal and secular order—is shortly to be superseded, that the State is not the permanent but only the temporary medium of the social life.

Yet it never seems to have occurred to Jesus to counsel withdrawal from the State or neglect of civic obligations, any more than it occurred to him to counsel withdrawal from ordinary secular avocations or neglect

of ordinary duty. He may have failed, for the reasons just suggested, to realise the ethical importance of the State, the ethical significance of citizenship ; but he did not set himself in opposition to the State, he did not see in it, as his earliest disciples seem to have seen, the enemy of the true life of the individual. To interpret his teaching as implying such an antagonism to the State is to fall into the error, against which I have already argued, of confusing his spiritual and unworldly point of view with that of mere asceticism. That, when the question of the importance of social institutions is once raised, he does not fail to recognise this importance, is obvious from his deliverance regarding the family, which forms the great exception to his usual reticence on such questions. He answers the question put to him by the Pharisees about the legitimacy of divorce, and explicitly abrogates the law of Moses on the subject.

But, it is objected, the practice of the Christian virtue of forgiveness, obedience to the precept of non-resistance of evil, means disloyalty to the State. To allow injuries to go unpunished, to refuse to take advantage of the provision which the State makes for their punishment, is to do what in us lies to destroy the State ; if all acted on this maxim, there would be no State. Now it must be observed, first, that this maxim, as enunciated by Christ, is a *principle*, not a *rule*, of conduct ; secondly, that its obvious application is not to the public, but to the private life of the individual, just as in the case of the maxim : "Swear not at all, but let your Yea be Yea and your Nay Nay " ; and finally, that he is contemplating the conduct of the higher spiritual life—the higher order of the Kingdom of God—where love supercedes force, and no man looks to his own things but every man to the things of others ; he is describing the

ideal life, and legislating for it. And is it not the case that just in so far as we do submit ourselves to the higher and more stringent laws of the life of goodness, we transcend the sphere of personal rights and cease to attach the old importance to personal injuries? Is not the very necessity of the State, in its present form, the very necessity of forcibly protecting the rights of the individual from attack by other individuals, a sad commentary on the imperfection of our Christianity rather than an evidence of the inadequacy of the Christian ideal? Is not the State, in this sense, after all but a means to an end more important than itself? Is not the kingdom of righteousness in reality the kingdom of love and self-sacrifice rather than the kingdom of force and self-assertion?

The criticisms which we have been considering are not only closely connected with one another, but rest upon the same fundamental misunderstanding of the ethical teaching of Jesus. They all alike insist upon a literal interpretation of that teaching, in the sense that it is to be taken as a system of rules, a code of duties, "an ethical code adequate for all time." And it is not difficult to show that this (or any other code) is not adequate for all time, that the new time brings with it new conditions and reveals new duties. But surely "the truth is," as the author of 'Ecce Homo' has well said, "that he did not leave a code of morals in the ordinary sense of the word—that is, an enumeration of actions prescribed and prohibited. Two or three prohibitions, two or three commands, he is indeed recorded to have delivered, but on the greater number of questions on which men require moral guidance he has left no direction whatever." The very criticism which he had

to make upon the teaching of the Scribes and Pharisees—the moral guides of his day—was that it was too casuistical, too detailed ; that it endeavoured to stereotype, and codify, the free life of the spirit of goodness. “Instead of giving laws to his society, he would give to every member of it a power of making laws for himself.” Instead of enunciating rules, he enunciated principles of conduct, the application of which he left to the intelligence of the individual, guided by the illumination of moral experience. Nay, what he imparted was rather an impulse and enthusiasm that would captivate the will than a mere illumination of the intellect. Let the heart but be filled by the enthusiasm of humanity, by the love of righteousness for its own sake, and the individual may be trusted to discover for himself the duties—the ever new duties—which he owes to his fellows. Christ is too wise to attempt to anticipate the future course of moral experience, the future lines of duty in detail.

It is Christianity as a spirit and a point of view with which we must come to terms if we would rightly appreciate its ethical significance, not Christianity as a code of moral laws or even as a system of morality. Its spirit and its point of view are, I have sought to show, that of the highest morality we know. And yet here, once more, we must be careful not to mis-state the relation of the Christian to the Pagan morality. The spirit and the point of view of the former is higher than, but not opposed to, that of the latter. The advance of Christianity upon Paganism does not consist in a “reversal of all the moral values of Paganism,” in the absolute condemnation of its fundamental principles. It is the fulfilment, rather than the negation, of Pagan morality : there is an identity beneath all the differ-

ence—an identity of essential spirit and point of view. Develop the deeper implications of Pagan morality, and you have the Christian morality. It has been said, for example, that the idea of duty is absent from the highest morality of the Greeks. But surely in Socrates, in Plato and in Aristotle, in the Cynics and the Stoics, we find the affirmation of the intrinsic claim of ideal excellence, of the obligatoriness of the rational life upon a rational being like man ; and in Aristotle we find the affirmation of the superior value and dignity of the “theoretic” or spiritual life to the practical life which is governed by the ideal of self-satisfaction. Again, it is often said that the spirit of altruism and self-sacrifice is absent from Greek morality. Yet the ideally good man of Greek ethics is the good citizen, and the good citizen is the man who unselfishly spends his life in the service of the State. So keenly does Plato feel the necessity of such a perfect disinterestedness in the ideal statesman that he disallows him all private possessions and enjoyments, while his definition of that quality of justice in which he finds the supreme good, alike of the individual and of the State, is “the doing by each of his own work”—that which he is best able to do—for the State as a whole. The Stoics developed and made explicit the idea of duty which was implicit in earlier Greek thought, at the same time expanding the Greek idea of citizenship into a universal humanitarianism, and reaffirming the Platonic paradox that “it is better to suffer than to do injustice”—ultimately better, better for the soul.

Surely this, rather than the opposite, is the true line of Christian apologetic : to show that Christianity is not the exceptional, the unaccountable, unrelated except by opposition to other modes of life and thought, but

the supremely reasonable, the truly normal, including and interpreting, and thereby transcending, all the previous experience and insight of the race. For in a wider sense than that of their original application the words of its Founder are true, that he came not to destroy, but to fulfil.



## VI

### CHRISTIANITY AND SOCIALISM

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**T**HE relation of Socialism to Christianity has been and is conceived in two opposite ways by the advocates of Socialism. On the one hand, it has been maintained, especially by its Continental expositors, that it is the antithesis of Christianity; that the Church, instead of being the friend and defender of the poor and oppressed, has allied itself with the ruling classes, has lent itself to that exploitation of the worker which is the bane of our social life, and has done its best to strengthen those forces of conservatism and stagnation which retard social progress, and that it must therefore share the fate of other antiquated institutions if a new and better social order is to be created. The opposition, it will be seen, is rather to the Church (or the Churches) than to Christianity, rather to the actual life and conduct of professing Christians and to the social attitude of official and organised Christianity, than to the original and essential message of Christianity itself.

It is not surprising, therefore, to find the opposite view maintained with equal emphasis and conviction—namely, that the true, original, and essential Chris-

tianity is identical in its teachings with Socialism. The most recent and notable, as well as perhaps the strongest, statement of this view is that of the Rev R. J. Campbell in his 'Christianity and the Social Order.' "The one outstanding fact," he says, "upon which there cannot be two opinions is the fact that Jesus preached an ideal social order on earth when he preached the Kingdom of God, and that he was driven to do so by his clear perception of the ills under which his countrymen suffered in a time when justice for the oppressed was seldom to be had. The ideal social order would be one in which there would be no question either of poverty or of riches."

I believe that these opposite representations of the relation of Socialism to Christianity are almost equally misleading and inaccurate. As against the first, we must insist upon the distinction between essential or ideal Christianity, on the one hand, and the actual Christianity of the Churches and of individual Christians on the other. As against the second, we must distinguish between the ideal and method of Christianity, as formulated by its Founder, on the one hand, and the ideal and method of contemporary Socialism on the other.

To take the latter of these distinctions first, it is historically inaccurate to describe the Founder of Christianity as primarily, or specifically, a social reformer, and still more so to describe him as a Socialist. The impression left on our minds by the Gospel accounts of the life and teaching of Jesus is very different. It is that of an enthusiast for righteousness; the preacher of "an ideal social order," not in the sense of the rectification of social wrongs and inequalities, the establishment of a better political and economic order, or of the production of "the greatest happiness of the greatest number" by the more righteous distribution of this

world's goods, but in the sense of the regeneration of human society through the regeneration of the individual will. His eye is fixed on a spiritual good—righteousness itself, alike on its Godward and on its manward side, in comparison with which the external goods of a material and economic kind sink into insignificance—a good of character which is independent of outward circumstances and conditions; upon “a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness,” which will shortly supersede the present order of things with all its unrighteousness and moral disorder. His mind is so preoccupied with this higher good and that other world that he has no interest left for the problems of social, economic, or political reform. As he sees it, the State and human society on this earth have no future; the Kingdom of Heaven or of God is a kingdom not of this world, to be realised through the gradual or sudden amelioration of present conditions, but a Messianic Kingdom, a new and purely spiritual order of things. He deals not so much with the problem of social well-being as with the problem of its ethical presuppositions. The regeneration of Society, he sees, implies the regeneration of the individual, and he seems unconscious of the ethical importance of society itself as the condition of individual character. His moral idealism disregards the whole real world of outward and material circumstances, as merely outward and material, and therefore irrelevant to the true life and good of the individual. The true life is not that of earthly citizenship but that of divine Sonship; the State, with its elaboration of the means to material good, is not even the instrument of that higher and spiritual good which is found simply in the right attitude of the human will to the Will of God. It was just for this reason that Christ so sadly disappointed the Messianic expectations of his time: he

refused to interest himself in the problem of the political (and economic) fortunes of his people ; he insisted upon a purely spiritual interpretation of the ideal of the Kingdom of God and of the Messianic office. To represent him as a social reformer is to make him a prophet, in the Old Testament sense of a religious statesman—a statesman of the Theocracy, or, at best, the conventional Messiah of Jewish expectation.

The one apparent exception to this statement will be found to be in reality a confirmation of it : I mean the exaltation of poverty and the depreciation of wealth. One of the most authentic sayings of the Founder of Christianity is "Blessed are the poor" ; and as he seems to have regarded poverty as a condition favourable to the higher life of the spirit, so he seems to have regarded wealth as the most unfavourable condition. "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of heaven. (It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven.)" So far is he from holding that material or economic good is a part of the essential good that he sees in it not even an instrumental good or condition of the higher spiritual good, but rather an obstacle, the greatest of all obstacles to that good ; and in poverty, or the very absence of such material and economic good, he sees the condition most favourable to the attainment of man's chief end. So far is he from preaching an ideal of a more equal or equitable distribution of this world's goods, that, assuming the inevitableness of the continued existence of the extremes of poverty and wealth, he congratulates the poor on their poverty, on their freedom from the temptation which wealth offers to the human spirit, and warns the rich to be on their guard against this temptation. "An ideal social order in which there would be no question either of poverty or riches "

is entirely beyond the horizon of his imagination when it busies itself with the question of human destiny.

On the other hand, it is never to be forgotten that Christ does not regard it as his mission to supervise, in the sense of negating, Judaism; he came not to destroy but to fulfil the Law and the Prophets. His Kingdom is, like that of the Old Testament, a kingdom of righteousness. If it is true to say that the righteousness of the Law and the Prophets is synonymous with justice, and the righteousness of the New Testament synonymous with love, it is no less true that the former pointed forward to the latter as its completion, and that the latter points back to the former as its pre-supposition. And if the Founder of Christianity has little or nothing to say about that social justice which was the great burden of the Prophetic message, it is only because he is speaking to those who are familiar with that message, and because it is needless to remind them of the rudiments of that lesson of righteousness whose higher forms he is constrained to teach. As Dr George Adam Smith has finely said, "the unfulfilled prophecy of Israel is the conscience of Christianity." He whose gospel was a gospel of love, and for whom the secret of human righteousness was a love to God which was inseparable from love to man, might well assume that what had become a commonplace, almost a truism, of the religious consciousness of Israel needed not to be taught over again by him, and was in no danger of being forgotten by his disciples.

It is also to be remembered that Christ's method was to enunciate principles, and to leave the application of these principles to the individual. That the principles must be applied, translated into terms of concrete duty and practical detail, he, of course, assumed. A merely general and abstract or unapplied Christianity

is no Christianity at all. It is the mere profession without the reality, which he so sternly denounces in those who call him Lord, Lord, and do not the things which he commands. He finds the measure of the faithfulness of his disciples in conduct. And the great practical application of his principles is the social one: "Inasmuch as ye did it to one of the least of these, ye did it unto me." His religious idealism does not blind him to the reality of the ordinary material needs; in the ministry to these needs he sees the expression of that love which is the supreme principle of his Kingdom. In the failure to give this practical and social application to his principles we may be sure that he would see the unmistakable mark of the unreality of later Christianity.

We must be careful not to exaggerate this unreality. The practical and social significance of Christianity was written too legibly on the face of the original message to be entirely missed by its disciples, and its influence for good, in this practical and social sense, is simply incalculable. It is hardly too much to say that we owe to it the very idea of "charity." As Lecky says: "There can be no question that neither in practice nor in theory, neither in the institutions that were founded nor in the place that was assigned to it in the scale of duties, did charity in antiquity occupy a position at all comparable to that which it has obtained by Christianity. Nearly all relief was a State measure, dictated much more by policy than by benevolence. . . . A very few Pagan examples of charity have indeed descended to us. . . . But the active, habitual, and detailed charity of private persons, which is so conspicuous a feature in all Christian societies, was scarcely known in antiquity, and there are not more than two or three moralists who have even noticed it. . . . Christianity for the first time made charity a rudimentary virtue, giving it a leading

place in the moral type and in the exaltations of its teachers. Besides its general influence in stimulating the affections, it effected a complete revolution in this sphere, by regarding the poor as the special representatives of the Christian Founder, and thus making the love of Christ, rather than the love of man, the principle of charity. . . . A vast organisation of charity presided over by the bishops and actively directed by the deacons soon ramified over Christendom, till the bond of charity became the bond of unity, and the most distant sections of the Christian Church corresponded by the interchange of mercy. . . . As time rolled on, charity assumed many forms, and every monastery became a centre from which it radiated. By the monks the nobles were overawed, the poor protected, the sick tended, travellers sheltered, prisoners ransomed, the remotest spheres of suffering explored. Sometimes, the legends say, the leper's form was in a moment transfigured, and he who came to tend the most loathsome of mankind received his reward, for he found himself in the presence of his Lord." <sup>1</sup>

But the influence of Christianity, especially upon its earlier disciples, goes much further than this. "The attitude of primitive, and even to some extent of mediæval, Christianity towards private property and towards slavery," says Sidgwick, "is, I think, best understood by trying to look at the two institutions as much as possible in the same light. Both were regarded as encroachments on the original rights of all members of the human family—since men were naturally free and the fruits of the earth naturally common. Both would disappear in the future when Christ's Kingdom came to be realised; both, however, were to be accepted as parts of the actually established order

<sup>1</sup> 'History of European Morals,' Vol. II, pp. 78-84.

of secular society ; but the harshness of both kinds of inequality could even now be removed, and ought to be removed, by brotherly treatment of bondsmen and of the poor.”<sup>1</sup> But “the communism attempted in the apostolic age was cherished in the traditions of the early and mediæval Church as the ideal form of Christian society.” The attempt to realise this ideal in the Church at Jerusalem is well known, but its importance has not been fully appreciated. We read that after the Pentecostal outpouring of the Spirit, “all that believed were together, and had all things in common ; and they sold their possessions and goods and parted them to all, according as any man had need. . . . And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and soul : and not one of them said that aught of the things which he possessed was his own ; but they had all things in common. . . . For neither was there among them any that lacked : for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them and brought the prices of the things that were sold and laid them at the apostles’ feet ; and distribution was made unto each according as any one had need.”

Cyprian, in the third century speaking of this communism of the early Church, deduces the common brotherhood of man (and the communism which it implies) from the common Fatherhood of God. “Such conduct is that of the true sons and imitators of God ; God’s gifts are to all mankind, the day enlightens all, the sun shines upon all, the rain falls and the wind blows upon all. To all men comes sleep ; the splendour of the stars and the moon are common to all. Man is truly imitator of God when he follows the common beneficence of God by imparting to all the brotherhood the good things which he possesses.” And Saint Ambrose

<sup>1</sup> ‘History of Ethics,’ p. 121 n.



in the fourth century enunciates still more explicitly the doctrine of the community of property. "What injustice is there in my diligently preserving my own, so long as I do not invade the property of another? Shameless saying! My own, sayest thou? What is it, and from what secret places hast thou brought it into the world? When thou enteredst into the light, when thou camest from thy mother's womb, what wealth didst thou bring with thee? . . . That which is taken by thee beyond what would suffice to thee is taken by violence. Is it that God is unjust in not distributing to us the means of life equally, so that thou shouldst have abundance while others are in want? Or is it not rather that he wished to confer upon thee marks of his kindness, while he crowned thy fellow with the virtue of patience. Thou, then, who hast received the gift of God, thinkest thou committest no injustice by keeping to thyself alone what would be the means of life to many? . . . It is the bread of the hungry thou keepest, it is the clothing of the naked thou lockest up; the money thou buriest is the redemption of the wretched." Again, speaking of the birds of the air, he says: "They are a great example truly, and one worthy of our faithful imitation, for if God's Providence never fails to supply the fowls of heaven, albeit they use no husbandry, and trouble nothing about the prospects of the harvest, the true cause of our want would seem to be avarice. It is for this reason that they have an abundance of suitable food, because they have not learnt to claim as their private and peculiar property the fruits of the earth which have been given to them in common for their food. We have lost common property by the claims of private property. How far will your mad lusts take you, ye rich people, till you dwell alone upon the earth? Why do you at once turn Nature out of doors and claim the possession of

her for your own selves ? The land was made for all : why do you rich men claim it as your private property ? Nature knows nothing of rich men ; she bore us all poor. Nature lavished all things for all in common ; so likewise God made all things to be produced, that all should have common pasture and the land should be a kind of property common to all men. Nature then produced common property. Robbery made private property."

If the early Fathers do not insist upon the realisation of this ideal of community of property, they do insist that what we are apt to think of as charity is nothing more than common justice, the payment of the debt we owe to the poor whom we have deprived of their rightful goods. "Really," says St Gregory the Great (fourth century), "when we administer any necessities to the poor, we give them their own ; we do not bestow our goods upon them. We do not fulfil the works of mercy. We discharge the debt of justice. Hence it was that Very Truth, when he told us to be careful to show mercy, said, 'See that ye do not your justice before men.' In harmony with this, the Psalmist, too, said : 'He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor, his justice remaineth for ever.' For when he reviewed a lavish generosity to the poor, he chose to call it justice rather than mercy, because what is given us by a common God is only justly used when those who have received it use it in common."

While the mediæval Church receded from such extreme interpretations of the principles of Christianity, abandoned the ideal of communism, and asserted its own place in the aristocratic constitution of mediæval society, it did not fail to insist upon the drastic application of these principles to the conduct of the secular and economic life. It condemned Interest or Usury ; it

included Avarice among the seven deadly sins and insisted upon a "just price," as against that which was determined by the "higgling of the market." In its view of labour as the only rightful source of wealth, its teaching "had a close resemblance," as Professor Ashley says, "to that of modern Socialists." "God and the labourer," as one widely-read theologian expressed it, "are the true lords of all that serves for the use of man. All others are either distributors or beggars"; and he goes on to explain that "the clergy and gentry are debtors to the husbandman and craftsmen, and only deserve their higher honour and reward so far as they perform those duties as 'ruling classes,' which involves greater labour and greater peril."

The Reformers were less strenuous in their application of Christian principles to the economic life, and the modern Christian world has gone still further in the relaxation of the older Catholic teaching in this reference. Calvin justifies usury, though insisting that it must not be exacted from the suffering and the needy. His teaching on the subject is regarded by Professor Ashley as "in a very real sense a turning-point in the history of European thought." In our own time there has been a revival of "Christian Socialism" within both the Roman Catholic and the Protestant Churches. In the former, the movement associated with the names of Dollinger and others "goes a long way," as Rae remarks, "with the Socialists in their cries of wrong, but only a short way in their 'plans of redress.' Their proposals 'may be wise or unwise, but they contemplate only corrections of the present industrial system, and not its reconstruction.'" More recently the Church of Rome has officially condemned Socialism as it has condemned "Modernism" generally. It is in the Church of England that Christian Socialism has most

vigorously asserted itself. The earlier teaching, that of Maurice and Kingsley, which was not Socialism in the present-day sense of the term, but rather a Christianised version of the co-operative movement, has been superseded by a far more complete acceptance of the Socialistic creed by leading Churchmen. The Lambeth Encyclical of 1908 calls upon the Church to consider how far and wherein it has departed from the teaching of Christ and the ancient Prophets regarding "Brotherhood, Liberty, and Mutual Justice." "In so far as the democratic and industrial movement is animated by these ideals, and strives to procure for all, especially for the weaker, just treatment and a real opportunity of living a true human life, we appeal to all Christians to co-operate actively with it." "The social mission and social principles of Christianity should be given a more prominent place in the study and teaching of the Church, both for the clergy and laity."

That Evangelical Christianity has not been without its inspiration for social reform and for philanthropic effort is sufficiently suggested by the names of Shaftesbury and Wilberforce and Elizabeth Fry in England, and of Chalmers and Guthrie in Scotland. Chalmers held that it was the duty of the Church rather than of the State to deal with the problems of poverty and destitution, and he conducted a remarkable experiment in the social application of Christianity in the parish of St John's in Glasgow. Both Chalmers and Guthrie were convinced of the importance of the education of the young as a most important means of social well-being, and both sought to translate their theory into practical form. It is also to be remembered that from 1597 to 1845 the administration of poor relief was in the hands of the Kirk Sessions, and its sources were the voluntary offerings of the people, as distinguished from

the public assessments and administration which prevailed in England.

Whilst we are not warranted in saying that the practical and social application of Christian principle has been entirely missed, the defect of actual Christianity tried in the light of the Christian ideal has been the incompleteness of that application. Poverty and destitution and all the evils which they mean have been accepted as inevitable incidents in human life, and the effort has been rather to relieve the suffering which they cause than to abolish, or even seriously to diminish, the suffering by destroying or at all events reducing its cause, the poverty and destitution itself. "The poor ye have always with you." Sometimes indeed the attitude assumed towards poverty and suffering has been even positively unchristian, and these things have been regarded only as the opportunity of the exercise of the Christian virtue of charity and the means of accumulating merit in the eyes of heaven. But the great mistake in the interpretation of Christian duty has been the substitution of charity for justice, the failure to realise that the latter is the presupposition of the former virtue.

To complete the practical and social application of Christianity, we must extend it to the State and to the industrial life of the modern community. The principle, that of love or benevolence, remains the same; but the changed conditions of modern life imply new applications of it, new interpretations of its significance for us. The Christian ideal for us must be not the primitive ideal of a select society, saved from the contamination of the secular and civic life, that of the Church as distinct and separate from the State, but that of the Christian State—the permeation of the ordinary secular life, and especially of the industrial life, by the spirit of Christianity. Experience has taught us the intimate relation

of ethical to material and economic good ; that the moral life is conditioned, that the "environment" counts for much in the life of the individual in the formation of character, and that among the most important factors in moral education are the social and economic conditions. The revolution in the industrial life of the modern community effected by the introduction of machinery and the creation of the new distinction between capital and labour has resulted in a new form of social injustice or unrighteousness, in a new form of poverty and destitution, on the one hand, and a new form of wealth on the other ; in a new class distinction, that between the proletariat and the millionaire, and in the formation of a new and powerful middle class. The simple and naïve charity that met the needs and constituted the Christian duty of an earlier and simpler order of things has been rendered hopelessly antiquated by the changed order of things in which we live. No amount or degree of "organisation" will suffice to bring it up to date. We need to be reminded of the ancient Prophetic message and ideal of justice or social righteousness which was never intended, as we have seen, to be superseded but taken up into and incorporated in the higher social ideal of Christianity. We can imagine what scathing words of condemnation our forgetfulness of the elementary obligations of social justice, in our preoccupation with those of a so-called "charity" which affects to transcend them, would have drawn from him who condemned the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees of his time. "These things ought ye to have done, and not to have left the others undone." The startling "curse" of the unemployed upon the "charity" of their wealthy patrons has a deep warrant in the true order and mutual implication of the Christian virtues. The "quality of mercy" that

is alone worthy of blessing is that which is founded deep in a justice whose claims are so exacting that the tale of its obligation is never fully told, and what we had fondly supposed was charity is seen to be only justice in disguise, and generally in a very thin disguise indeed, not something more, but something much less than justice, at best a belated and more or less imperfect reparation of wrongs the responsibility for which we cannot escape.

It would seem clear, then, that an important part of the modern, practical and social application of Christianity is found in social and political reform, in the rectification of economic injustice, in the reform of the State in the direction of the socialistic ideal. Such reform is inevitable if the State is to become the sphere of the Christian life, and not its antithesis and negation. While the Christian Church cannot, as such, commit itself to any particular method of reform or to any political party, it stands committed, by its essential principle, to the ideal and spirit of Socialism, to the spirit and ideal of social service, as against that of personal gain, the spirit and ideal of co-operation as against that of competition, the spirit and ideal of love as against that of hostility to our neighbour. It stands committed to Socialism as a principle and ideal, though not necessarily to Socialism as a method, to ethical if not to technical Socialism. The problem of the true method of attaining the ideal of social justice must be solved by the statesman; but the Church, as an organisation, and the individual Christian, as a citizen of the modern State, must insist upon the ideal, and refuse to rest satisfied with any solution of the problem which stops short of the nearest practicable approximation to that ideal. Such social reform as I have suggested can only come about in response to the demand of public

opinion. It is surely the duty of the Church to educate public opinion by educating the social conscience of the individual. And the social conscience, especially of the higher and middle classes, surely needs education. "Here then," as the late Bishop Westcott once said, "lies the duty of the Christian teacher. The thoughts of a true Socialism—the thoughts that men are 'one man' in Christ, sons of God and brethren, suffering and rejoicing together, that each touches all, and all touch each with an inevitable influence, that as we live *by* others, we can find no rest till we live *for* others, are fundamental thoughts of the Law and the Prophets, of the Gospels and the Epistles, which he is empowered and bound to make effective under the conditions of modern life." He must show "that Christianity, which has dealt hitherto with the *individual*, deals also with the *State*, with classes, with social conditions, and not only with personal character . . . that it is here, on the sordid field of selfish conflicts, that we must prepare *the Kingdom of God*."

To sum up what I have tried to say, while it seems to me that the application of the Christian ideal to modern social conditions was undreamt of by the Founder of Christianity, this social and practical application is implied in that ideal, as the consummation of the aspirations of the Old Testament Prophets for the reign of social righteousness, in the concern of Christ for the material needs of suffering humanity, and in his making social service the criterion of discipleship. The changed conditions of modern life demand new applications of the Christian ideal. Thus modernised—that is, interpreted in the light of modern conditions—the Christian ideal, on its human side, is identical with the ideal of contemporary Socialism. But the method of realising this ideal of social justice which supersedes the older



ideal of charity and relief is the problem of the statesman whose special knowledge of, and trained instinct for, the practical possibilities must determine the comparative merits of Socialism and Individualism, or of some compromise between them, as the true solution.

## VII

### METHODS OF INSTRUCTION IN PHILOSOPHY<sup>1</sup>

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IN a "Lecture against Lecturing," published in the 'New Review,' May 1890, and republished in his 'Miscellaneous Essays and Addresses,' the late Professor Sidgwick has given forcible expression to a doubt which must have occurred to some if not all of you, and which I remember to have occurred more than once to myself as I listened to academic lectures—whether "the ordinary expository lecture, in most subjects, and so far as the most intelligent class of students are concerned," is not "an antiquated survival, a relic of the times before the printing-press was invented; maintained partly by the mere conservatism of habit and the prestige of ancient tradition, partly by the difficulty . . . of finding the right substitute for it." The traditional view of the method of academic teaching is that all that is necessary is "that the teacher and the class should be brought together in a room at a certain hour on certain days of the week . . . and that the teacher should expound his subject in a series of lectures, varying from forty-five to sixty minutes in length. This is the traditional, time-

<sup>1</sup> An introductory lecture in the class of Moral Philosophy, University of Edinburgh, October 15, 1907.

honoured, almost universal practice of university professors, ordinary or extraordinary, in the countries that share European civilisation ; it is supported by an overwhelming consensus of opinion and practice, and most persons with whom I have spoken on the subject hardly seem able to conceive it as needing or admitting fundamental alteration." While "in England it is generally thought that academic teaching, to be effective, must include some kind of exercises written by the student and looked over by the teacher, and some kind of oral communication between the two, in the way of question and answer, in Germany the instrument of academic instruction is—in most departments of study, and so far as the majority of students are concerned—simply the lecture ; and even in England it is commonly thought to be the main if not the sole educational business of a professor to expound his subject in a course of lectures." In Scotland the value of the lecture as the great method of academic instruction has been appraised even more highly than in England, and it is only quite recently, and in connection with other questions of university reform, that the question of the validity of that valuation has been raised among us. The necessity of supplementing scientific lectures by laboratory work, if not of subordinating the lecture to the laboratory form of instruction, is now generally admitted ; but so far as the study of Philosophy and the Humanistic sciences is concerned, we are only awakening to the realisation of the fact that the library is the laboratory of the student of these subjects, and Professor Sidgwick's "lecture against lecturing" is specially directed against the substitution of the habit of listening to lectures for the habit of reading books on the part of the student. What is the use, he asks, of repeating in a lecture what the student can read for himself, and will do far better to

read for himself, in a book? The printing-press has taken away the occupation of the old-fashioned lecturer.

Of the justice of this condemnation of the lecture, regarded as a substitute for the book, I think there can be no question. The very exception which Sidgwick allows to his general statement seems to me to be its best justification. The exception is that of "academic students who require the discipline of schoolboys. It may be necessary to drive these latter into lecture-rooms in order to increase the chance of their obtaining the required instruction somehow. I say 'increase the chance,' because it is by no means certain that young people of this turn of mind will actually drink of the fountain of knowledge, even if they are led to it daily between 10 A.M. and 1 P.M. But the compulsion may, no doubt, increase the chance of their imbibing knowledge, since it is difficult to find amusement during a lecture which will distract one's attention completely from the lecturer; although I have known instances in which the difficulty has been successfully overcome by patient ingenuity." I think you will agree with me that the ingenuity of the Scottish student, at any rate, may be trusted to find a way of overcoming the difficulty. But even if he does not do so, but has to submit to the boredom of listening to a lecture from which he cannot escape, I question whether his chance of imbibing knowledge in this way is really increased. It is one thing to take a horse to the water; it is another thing to make him drink. I firmly believe that it is even so with our academic youth, and that the sooner we give up all our old ideas about "compulsory education," whether as regards subjects of study or methods of teaching, the better will it be for education. You can no more compel a man (or a child) to know than you can compel him to goodness or religion. As Plato says, "no trace of slavery

ought to mix with the studies of the freeborn man. For while the constrained performance of bodily labours exerts no evil influence upon the body, in the case of the mind no study, pursued under compulsion, remains rooted in the memory." If the only defence of the lecture is that it is a means of compelling the student to know something about a subject which nothing would induce him to study for himself, we may as well give up the case at once. I pity the students who are lectured with this end in view ; I pity still more, if possible, the professor who has to lecture them into such a pseudo-knowledge.

The true function of the lecture is discovered only when we cease to regard it as a substitute for the book, or as a self-sufficient method of education ; when we cease to regard it as the duty of the lecturer to deliver, and of the student to assimilate, a system of knowledge which might be as well, or better, derived from the study of a treatise or a set of treatises on the subject, and regard the lecture as an aid and guide to the literature of the subject. This relation of the Lecture to the Library is admirably stated by Professor Campbell Fraser in an introductory lecture to his class on "The Philosophical Classroom in the Nineteenth Century," published in a volume of 'Essays in Philosophy' in 1856. The classroom should be, he says, the introduction to the library. "It should provide a key to the philosophical, and through that to the general library, and also the power to use the key." "I think I can show that it is as indispensable as ever—in some respects more so ; notwithstanding the vast increase of modern books and libraries." "The very magnitude of our philosophical library is the strongest reason for asking you to pause and ponder for some months, in an academical classroom, before you make an *independent* assault upon it.

Instead of uniformity in its lessons, there is much outward sign of discord. Instead of a cosmos, our books in logic and metaphysics and ethics seem on the surface to represent a chaos of opinions—a very Babel of discordant tongues. . . . Perhaps I am not far wrong when I say that, as a deficiency in the number of philosophical books, and books of every sort, was the obstacle to intellectual progress some centuries ago, so now, in this age the obstacle is of the opposite kind. Not the absence, but the over-abundant presence of books is the evil and temptation of these times. In other ages the mental aliment supplied by books could not be found. In this age it is pressed upon men in every form; and we are all suffering, in consequence, from intellectual indigestion.” “A term of study in the modern philosophical classroom should . . . teach the true proportions and salient points of the vast mass of Philosophical Literature, which, as it were, stands in array before the student, and point out the portions in that mass where it is most important that he should effect a lodgement,” or, in other words, should enable him to distinguish and to appreciate what is classical in that literature, should teach him at once what it is best worth his while to read, and how to read this part which is in reality better (for him) than the whole. It is not to be forgotten that reading is an art which, like other arts, has to be acquired, and that the acquisition of this art is the great service which a course of lectures in the subject ought to render to the student. Sidgwick’s view of the superiority of the book to the lecture presupposes the knowledge of this art on the part of the student. As he himself says, “I have only in view the *élite* of academic students: the intelligent and industrious youth who have been trained from childhood in the habit of deriving ideas from books, and are able and willing to apply prolonged labour

and concentrated attention to the methodical perusal of books under the direction of their teachers. My remarks have no reference to that part of the community that has never had the opportunity of acquiring a thorough mastery of the art of reading books." I think we must add that the art of reading philosophical books is an art by itself, which can hardly be acquired but through the aid of the teacher, as any one will believe who has watched the struggles of the beginner with the literature of the subject, even when this has been carefully selected for him, or who has marked the ineradicable defects of the "self-taught" mind and the permanent harm which sometimes results from a premature and independent plunge into the sea of philosophical literature before the youth has been taught to swim in that sea or been told, by those who know, of its eddies and its currents, its depths and its shallows.

The lecture, then, is not to be regarded as an end in itself, but only as a means to a further and better end ; its value is instrumental, not final. Its function is to provide the introduction to the subject, to make possible the independent study of its literature, to initiate the student into its mysteries, but nothing more. Both the teacher and the student need to be reminded of this essential limitation of its function. Whenever a higher or more permanent value is attached to it, whenever it is allowed to stand between the student and the literature, whenever it becomes the medium of the conveyance of a ready-made system from the mind of the lecturer to that of the student, its essential purpose is defeated, and it becomes an evil rather than a good. Hence the shortness of its lease of life. The student is always outgrowing it, the lecture is always superseding itself ; and the true lecturer will rejoice in this self-effacement, will see in this loss of his occupation the very crown of his labours.

And when he meets, in an honours class, "the *élite* of academic students," he will probably refuse to lecture to them, and will insist upon their regarding him rather as their fellow-student than as their teacher in the old sense. He will recognise that the time for the lecture has passed, and that the time for the laboratory or *seminar* method has arrived. The time for the lecture is at the beginning of the study of the subject; its value even at that stage is merely instrumental; once that stage is passed, once the student has been introduced to the subject, it loses even that instrumental value, and arrests rather than promotes his further progress.

But wherein, it will still be asked, lies the peculiar value of the lecture as an introduction to the subject? Wherein consists its superiority to the printed treatise? The answer is that its value is that of the spoken, as distinguished from that of the written word. This is suggested by Sidgwick's exceptions to the general condemnation which he passes upon the lecture. The lecture which he condemns is the merely expository lecture—that is, the lecture whose object is merely to convey information. Among the lectures which he excepts are "lectures of which the method is dialectic and not simply expository," and "lectures on any subject whatever that are intended to stimulate interest rather than to convey information;" and he acknowledges "the counterbalancing advantages which the listener's position has as compared with the reader's." He further admits that "it may be fairly urged that the line which I have tried to draw, between lectures designed to arouse interest and lectures designed to give information, is only partially tenable; since a good lecture will stimulate while informing, more than the same discourse would do if printed, through the effect



of personal presence and utterance in stirring intellectual sympathy." The object of a philosophical lecture is so to state the question as to arouse the student's interest in it, to make it his own question, and thus to set him thinking about it for himself—to arouse philosophic thought by arousing interest in the problems of philosophic thought.

The superiority of the lecture to the book as an educational instrument in this respect lies in the appeal which the former makes to the collective mind of the class, to the social rather than to the merely individual consciousness. The lecture makes its appeal to the class as a whole, and the class as a whole responds to its appeal. The result is a heightening of the intellectual consciousness of the individual, parallel to that heightening (or deepening) of the emotional or moral consciousness of the individual produced by the appeal of the preacher or the orator. As Professor Campbell Fraser has said in the lecture from which I have already quoted: "Colleges and universities are meant to be centres of attraction, for collecting together numbers of persons, in order that they may accomplish collectively, and through social study, what cannot so well be accomplished in isolation. They are social organisations created for maintaining and promoting the higher and more difficult class of studies. They assume that *social* study has many advantages of which *solitary* study is destitute. They profess to provide a special system of means for rendering social study effective." It is this "collision of mind with mind" that constitutes the peculiar service of a university to its individual members. "In all the arrangements of the class," therefore, Professor Fraser continues, "I seek to evoke that mental sympathy or contagion, which is apt, by the very manifestation of an earnest wrestling with the doubts and

difficulties of these studies, to be communicated from one mind to another. Indeed, the word sympathy does not express the sufficient meaning. The mental world is pervaded by a kind of mystic influence. The social or sympathetic action of all adds to the intensity of the mental power of each. There is, I think, a kind of organic intellectual life in the human species, and in sections or societies of it, which influences the intellectual life of each member."

The style of the lecture, or spoken word, ought accordingly to be very different from that of the book, or written word. Its distinguishing quality ought to be its directness, its conversational character. The ideal lecture is a conversation with the class ; it is a dialogue, not a monologue. It is true that the lecturer must have the lion's share of the conversation, in the literal sense. But he must never forget to listen to the difficulties and objections of the class, even though these may be unexpressed. He ought to *see* them in the faces before him, even when he does not *hear* them stated. He ought to put himself sufficiently at the point of view of the class to be able to anticipate the class's difficulties and objections, and to answer them as he proceeds. The lecture is not, or ought not to be, stereotyped like the book ; it should be a fresh effort to present the question, and the answer, to this particular class ; it ought to be a statement, or a restatement, of the question as the lecturer now sees it and wants the present class to see it with him. It is this free, direct, conversational character that constitutes the peculiar value of the lecture as an instrument of education.

And why should not the conversation, occasionally at least, become literal ? Why should not the class express its difficulties, where the lecturer has failed, as he constantly must fail, to anticipate them ? Is not the

advantage of the living teacher, as compared with the book, that, as Plato said, you can ask questions of the one and not of the other? Sidgwick emphasises "the importance, for progress in philosophy, of stating perplexities clearly and precisely." The art that has to be learnt in order to achieve this result, he says, has been called the art of "concentrating fog." "In the earlier stages of philosophical study, fog is sure to arise from time to time. . . . An intellectual fog, like a physical fog, is very pervasive, and liable rapidly to envelop large portions of a subject even when its original source really lies in a very limited and not very important difficulty. The great thing, therefore, is to concentrate it." But, he objects, "the one thing that the lecturer cannot allow is the pause for reflection: he must go on talking." I fail to see why he must do so. Why not stop, and allow the class a chance to express its perplexities, and himself a chance to hear and answer them? I have found nothing more stimulating, both to the class and to myself, than such "pauses for reflection" and discussion in the midst of a lecture. If my ideal of the lecture as a conversation between the lecturer and the class is the true one, then the more literal the conversation can be made the better.

Here, again, it is necessary that both the lecturer and the student should guard against the mistaken idea that the lecture is an end in itself. The student, especially, is in constant danger of forgetting its merely instrumental value; he wants the lecturer to do his thinking for him. He assumes an attitude of passive acquiescence in what is presented to him, forgetting that the very object of a philosophical course is to teach him to think for himself, to weigh evidence, and form his own judgment on the ultimate questions of human experience, and that conclusions which he has not reached for him-

self have no value for him. The constant aim of the lecture should be not to save the student the trouble of thinking, but to stimulate him to think for himself. If this object of a philosophical education is to be attained, the lecture must be supplemented not only by independent reading on the part of the individual student, but by discussion, whether formal or informal, by the class as a whole. Only in this way can the lecture be kept in its proper place, and the social value of academic study be fully realised.

Discussion is an invaluable aid to reflection, an indispensable instrument of thought. It has been truly said that discussion is only "thinking writ large." It is social, as distinguished from individual, thinking. Plato tells us that all thinking is really conversation, the conversation of the mind with itself. And the conversation is always of a controversial character; it has always an affirmative and a negative side. It is only thus, Plato would say, by allowing the affirmative and negative to fight it out between them, that truth on any subject can be reached. Thought, in other words, is always critical: the criticism comes inevitably from within, if not from without. But the mind of the individual is always more or less languid and uncritical, always more or less partial to one side of the question, more easily acquiescent in some particular view. Not sufficiently self-critical, it needs the criticism of others. The conversation of the soul with itself is apt to be far too friendly; it is too apt to become a monologue. It is a great advantage to have the other points of view represented by other people. Social discussion is generally more effective than solitary discussion; the literal conversation is generally more useful, as well as more interesting, than the metaphorical.

Plato has signalled for all time the distinction between

two types of discussion, or between discussion and debate—between that which is inspired by no higher motive than the desire to influence opinion, to make your own opinion prevail, and the true type whose object is the discovery of truth; between mere Eristic and true Dialectic. The former is the method of the Sophists, the professors of the art of persuasion in the dicastery and in the public assembly; the latter is the method of Socrates, the seeker after truth. And if you would realise the value of the Socratic discussion as an aid to individual reflection, you have only to read a dialogue of Plato. You feel immediately the contrast between the earnestness of the Socratic love of truth and the Sophistic indifference to truth and love of victory. The procedure of the one is unprincipled, it is willing to pay any price for victory; that of the other is scrupulously loyal to truth, always ready to follow where the argument leads, even when it leads, as it generally does, to confusion and self-contradiction and the realisation of our ignorance of what we had seemed to know. The function of the argument is to show those who take part in it the difference between knowledge and mere opinion which mistakes itself for knowledge; the function of Socrates himself was to exhibit the confusion and self-contradiction of all unexamined and uncritical opinion. And the result of the process is at once positive and negative; the elimination of error is at the same time the discovery of truth. In such discussion it is a matter of unconcern on which side victory ultimately rests; he whose object is not personal triumph, but the triumph of the truth, will court defeat if defeat brings with it a larger and clearer vision of truth. Plato sets before us in sharpest contrast the vanity and conceit of the self-seeking Sophists and the humility of Socrates, the disciple of truth.

The result of such true discussion is not so much the establishment of any single opinion as true, or the refutation of any other as false—the definite triumph of one side and the definite defeat of the other—as the clearing up of our conceptions on the subject under discussion, the exhibition of the grounds of our opinions or of their groundlessness. The difference between mere opinion and knowledge is rather a difference of form than of content. Knowledge is just opinion which can give an account of itself, which can show its grounds. When Socrates insists that the Sophists know nothing, he does not mean that all their opinions are necessarily wrong; he only means that they have no intellectual right to these opinions, no security for their truth. When he insists that he also knows nothing, he does not mean he has no correct opinions, or even that he is entirely ignorant of the grounds of his opinions, but merely that he is unable to show all the grounds which underlie any one of these opinions, to give a complete account of any of them. Now it is the function of my opponent in discussion, who represents the opposite opinion, to bring home to me the weakness of my intellectual position, to compel me either to show the grounds of my opinion or to confess its groundlessness. It is, of course, equally my duty and my privilege to do my opponent the same service. It is by this conflict of opinions, by this social scrutiny of their grounds, that intellectual progress is alone possible. Thus we can understand the function of the mediæval *advocatus diaboli*. He seemed a mere devil's advocate, a mere spirit of denial, a destroyer of the truth. In reality he was God's advocate, the friend of truth. His function was to test opinions, to compel men to try all things and hold fast only those which were true, and not to rest content with anything short of an understanding of their truth. It was with a

wise insight into the nature of knowledge that the mediæval universities tested the intellectual attainments of their students by compelling them to "dispute" frequently during their course, and finally to conduct a formal "disputation," to defend some thesis obvious enough in itself, but difficult to establish by reduction to its grounds. A better test not only of the student's mastery of any particular subject but also of his general intellectual power could hardly be conceived.

Discussion, we may say, socialises the intellect, which has an individualism of its own. We have seen that its result is rather to compel us to take our opponent's point of view than to compel him to take ours. We must, in any case, take our opponent's point of view provisionally: we must understand his objections, if we are to answer them; and to understand his objections we must, for the time being, take his point of view. And as for the final outcome, we learn to agree, if it is only to agree to differ. We discover the *grounds* of our difference, and to that extent we agree; we discover some common ground, even if it be only a ground of difference. The best result of the best discussion is not that either disputant is converted to the side of his opponent, but that each so far persuades the other of the reasonableness of his view that each modifies his original position in the direction of the objections offered to it by the other—that is, in the direction of the other's view; and the greater the extent of the common ground from which the discussion starts, the greater is the likelihood of such a result. All discussion is, in a sense, belligerent or polemical; but we must remember that neither side has a monopoly of truth, that the alternatives of thought are rather complementary than mutually exclusive. The chief object of discussion is not mutual refutation, but mutual understanding. When we succeed in under-

standing one another, we shall agree with one another ; it is only because it is so difficult to understand one another that it is so difficult to agree. "I am confident," says Mr Bradley, "that none of us has ideas so absurd that, when understood, they should have no truth."

One of the most frequent causes of misunderstanding is the ambiguity of language ; one of the chief causes of our failure to understand one another, and even ourselves, is the different meanings which we attach to the same words. A word ought to be the sign and symbol of a thought, and the same word ought to stand for the same thought. Yet how imperceptibly the word changes its meaning ; what different things the same word may mean for different persons, and even for the same person at different times. How easily, how almost inevitably, we become the slaves of words. As one of our Scottish philosophers has quaintly put it : "As a servant that is extremely useful and necessary to his master by degrees acquires an authority over him, so that the master must yield to the servant, such is the case with regard to language. Its intention is to be a servant to the understanding ; but it is so useful and so necessary that we cannot avoid being sometimes led by it when it ought to follow." The ambiguity of which I speak may lurk in the most familiar words. An eminent living philosopher speaks, in pathetic tones, of "the fatal ambiguity of the word 'of.'"

It is often said, accordingly, that most of our controversies are mere logomachies, disputes about words. If, however, the result of the discussion is the arrival at anything like agreement in the use of the terms in question, this is a distinct intellectual gain. Terms are the expression of concepts, and a clear understanding of their significance is impossible without clear conceptions of the subject under discussion. To take refuge in the



mere word is the habit of the man who is tired of thinking for himself, and it is the challenge which discussion raises to come out of this refuge of lies that constitutes its peculiar value. Such a challenge it was that Socrates offered to his contemporaries, and that distinguished him from the Sophists. The Sophists trained their pupils to use words so skilfully that their hearers would be persuaded that they knew all about all the subjects about which they could talk, that their wisdom was equal to their fluency. Socrates asked the Sophists what they *meant* by these large and impressive words, and showed that they meant very different things at different times, and that it was impossible to use the terms consistently until they had learnt to think consistently. Discussion of the Socratic type emancipates us from the slavery of words, because it compels us to think for ourselves. It has been truly said that "language is mainly a storehouse of old and imperfect theory, a record of early attempts to deal with to-day's problems from a lower general point of view than is open to us to-day. . . . If knowledge is progressive, this means that at any given date there is something faulty in existing knowledge as crystallised in language." The best result of "conference" or discussion is not that "readiness" which Bacon places to its credit but that "exactness" which is no less its fruit than that of writing.

Finally, I would remind you that in your discussions here you are preparing yourselves for the practical work of life. Discussion has not merely a theoretical but a tremendous practical significance. In theory, at all events, the conduct of our political, no less than that of our intellectual life, is by discussion. Parliamentary government is government by discussion. In a democratic country it is public opinion that controls the destinies of the nation, and it is he who can form and

educate public opinion who is the true statesman. The politician is the disciple of public opinion : the statesman is its teacher. The discussions of Parliament are conducted in the presence not only of Parliament itself but of the whole nation, and even when these discussions do not influence the vote of Parliament, they constitute an appeal to that public opinion at whose bar every vote is ultimately compelled to justify itself. More and more are all the acts of our national life compelled to give an account of themselves to the nation itself. And in practical questions it is not so difficult to get at the true worth of opinions, to determine, at any rate, which is the sounder and the truer. Yet how much playing to the gallery, how common the appeal to the prejudice and self-interest of the individual or the class, rather than to unprejudiced and unselfish judgment as to the common good. How frequent the *argumentum ad hominem* ; how rare the *argumentum ad rem*. How constantly mere words, the very fossils of thought, the mere relics of past thought, are substituted for actual thinking, here no less than in more purely intellectual discussions. When the true disputant makes his appearance among such sophistical disputers, he is bound to get a hearing, if not from them then from the true mind of the nation ; he is bound to influence, if not the votes of his colleagues in Parliament, then the votes of the nation in choosing its Parliament, if not at this election, then at some later election. As our Lord Rector <sup>1</sup> has more than once insisted, and as we cannot be too often reminded, the great need of this and of every nation is sound thinking on the part of its statesmen and of its citizens alike. And what is the use of an academic education, above all of an education in Philosophy, if it does not teach us to think ?

<sup>1</sup> The Right Hon. R. B. Haldane, Secretary of State for War. [In 1908.]

## VIII

### LECTURE-SUMMARIES

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#### A.—GREEK AND CHRISTIAN ETHICS

##### § 1

SINCE morality is synonymous with consciously purposive activity, it implies a supreme purpose, end, or ideal; and this, the Moral Ideal, is the problem of the Science of Ethics, whose aim is the systematisation of our moral judgments, or judgments of Duty and Good, by their reduction to such a unifying principle, or standard of moral value.

The function of Science is the systematisation of our judgments, whether of Fact or of Value. The Natural Sciences seek thus to systematise our judgments of Fact, the Philosophical or Normative Sciences seek thus to systematise our judgments of Value. While facts are explained naturally or causally in terms of one another, they are explained philosophically in terms of an ideal, or standard of value, by reference to which they are either approved or condemned. Ethics is the Science of the Moral Ideal or Standard, by reference to which our judgments of moral value—that is, of the goodness or badness of moral facts—are rationalised or systematised.

## § 2

The basis of ethical science is psychological. The Moral Ideal, being the ideal of human action, must correspond to human nature, must be the expression of the human Will or Self. Hedonism and Rationalism alike rest upon a psychological view, implicit or explicit, of the nature of the Self, the former interpreting all activity in terms of Feeling, the latter in terms of Reason. Ethical Hedonism, in particular, has been generally based explicitly upon Psychological Hedonism; the doctrine that Pleasure is the Good, or that which we *ought* to seek, upon the doctrine that Pleasure is the only thing that we *can* seek. A theory of the Moral Ideal which attempts to reconcile these one-sided theories must rest upon a more complete theory of human nature, of Will or moral personality as the unity of thought and feeling.

## § 3

The "sense of duty" is the consciousness of the preferability, from the point of view of the Self, of the ideal or rational to the non-ideal, irrational, or merely impulsive type of action. This distinction, while it is in one sense a distinction of kind, is in another sense one of degree. The action may be more or less ideal; the ideal may be higher or lower; the deliberation or the self-reference of the impulsive idea may be more or less complete. And the choice of the lower ideal is always, as such, the choice of evil, or undutiful action. Further, it is to be noted that Reason cannot itself supply the motive of action; the impulsive or dynamic element is always supplied by Feeling.

The repetition of similar acts of choice leads to the formation of corresponding habits of choice, or of a corresponding character, virtuous or vicious ; and as the dutiful action becomes a virtuous habit, duty tends to coincide with inclination. But the progressive nature of the moral life implies the constant substitution of new for old ideals, and therefore the permanent antithesis of duty and inclination, and the constant necessity of fresh effort, in the life of the good man.

#### § 4

The moral consciousness of the Greeks is essentially a political consciousness : the man and the citizen are one, and the ethical investigation of the Good is undertaken with a view to Politics, or the art of Statesmanship, by which the Good shall be actualised in the good citizen—that is, the citizen of the good State. For both Plato and Aristotle the ideal man implies the ideal State. For both, as for the Greeks generally, the function of the State is not merely to provide the opportunity of goodness, but to make its citizens good, to educate them in habits of goodness by compelling them to obey laws which lay down the lines of good character. In Law they see the expression, not of mere Will or Power, but of Reason. This conception of Law reconciles political order with moral freedom. It implies that the citizen at once “ rules and is ruled,” that he is legislator as well as subject. This view of the relation of the individual to the State results from the smallness of the Greek City-State, in which every citizen could directly discharge all the functions of citizenship, legislative, judicial, and military. The defect of the Greek State is the existence of a slave class, excluded from citizenship, whose labour

provides the leisure for the higher life of citizenship. The Greek contempt for all practical activity except that of the "citizen" in the technical sense implies a blindness to the social or political significance of its other forms: the life of citizenship, the moral life itself, is reserved for a minority of individuals, and for a part of the life of the individual.

### § 5

For Plato, as for the other disciples of Socrates, the crowning evidence of the inadequacy of the State as the medium of the true life of the individual was the condemnation of Socrates. In this they saw the collision of true or ideal virtue with the conventional and unreal virtue represented by the State, the proof that the good man is not identical with the good citizen, and concluded either that the individual must find his true good apart from the State or that the State must be so radically changed as to make citizenship the expression of goodness. Socrates himself, while he realised the contradiction between loyalty to the State and loyalty to goodness or to God, sought to satisfy both claims, and as far as possible, to live the life of the good citizen, refusing to disobey the State even when it unjustly condemned him, lest by so doing he should frustrate the good achieved by the State in spite of its imperfections. To him, as to the ordinary Greek, the State seemed a necessary condition of the moral life of the individual.

### § 6

The aim of Socrates was practical,—the improvement of the character of his fellow-citizens; but the indis-

pensable means to this end was their moral enlightenment, the substitution of knowledge for ignorance of the nature of Virtue and the Good. Socrates is thus the founder of Ethics as a science, which he substituted for the useless and futile efforts of the pre-Sophistic philosophers to understand the nature of things. The Sophists had already turned from Nature to Man ; they taught the art of citizenship or the methods of political success, especially Rhetoric or the art of persuasion as the secret of political power, instead of attempting a scientific or theoretic understanding either of the nature of things or of virtue. In their substitution of the practical for the theoretic interest, and still more in their cultivation of the art of persuasion with a view to personal victory rather than the attainment of truth, Socrates saw an implicit scepticism, which was undermining knowledge and, therefore, morality. Holding that true virtue was the expression of knowledge (of Virtue and the Good), he reaffirmed the distinction between knowledge and opinion, and sought, in the interest of virtue, to substitute knowledge for opinion by a cross-examination of the latter and an exposure of its contradictions. He condemns ordinary, conventional, or civic virtue as founded on ignorance ; his mission is to convict his fellows of ignorance of their own ignorance.

### § 7

The Socratic Method of Question and Answer is essentially the Inductive Method, the search for the universal or conceptual element implied in our particular moral judgments. It is an effort to define the virtues, of which we say that this or that particular action is a case. A tentative or hypothetical definition is tested by

reference to the negative or contradictory instances. And while the result is generally rather the disproof of all the hypothetical definitions in turn than the formulation of the true concept in a final definition, the aim of the Socratic method is not, like that of the Sophists, merely negative; the condemnation of Opinion, or apparent Knowledge, implies a standard of real Knowledge, and the progressive elimination of error is at the same time the progressive discovery of truth.

### § 8

Virtue, Socrates held, is the expression of Knowledge; Vice, of Ignorance. Knowledge is omnipotent; it cannot be "overcome." The deliberate choice of Evil is impossible: we cannot "know the better and choose the worse." All vice is involuntary; it is reducible to intellectual error, to ignorance of the Good. The man who "chooses evil" is misled by appearances; he chooses what *seems* the greater good. The saving principle of human life, therefore, is the art of measuring, of distinguishing between moral appearance and moral reality, between apparent and real Good.

### § 9

The evidence of Xenophon, on the whole, suggests a hedonistic interpretation of the Good; but it may be doubted whether Xenophon understood Socrates. Plato, in the 'Protagoras,' deduces Hedonism from the Socratic Intellectualism—*i.e.*, from the identification of Virtue and Knowledge; but this is evidently intended rather as a discussion of the logical implications of the Socratic



dictum than as an account of the actual teaching of Socrates. In such historical dialogues as the 'Apology' and 'Crito' Plato represents Socrates as identifying Virtue with the Good, and as interpreting the Knowledge which is identical with Virtue as insight into the nature of Virtue, not as foresight of the consequences of our actions. We seem warranted, therefore, in concluding that the pleasure which he found to be inseparable from Virtue was regarded by him rather as its sanction than as itself the Good: Virtue is the human, and Pleasure the divine, side of the Good. Socrates uses the coincidence of Virtue and Pleasure as an argument with others, and at times even with himself; and when he does so, he *seems* to subordinate Virtue to Pleasure, and therefore to make Pleasure the Good. The reason why he does not oftener and more explicitly subordinate Pleasure to Virtue is to be found in his unconsciousness of the danger of the other subordination, the alternative theories of the Good as Pleasure and as Virtue respectively having not yet been formulated. The formulation of these rival theories of the Good by the Socratic Schools, the Cyrenaics and Cynics, is the first statement of the antithesis between Hedonism and Rationalism.

### § 10

The Socratic Schools failed to catch the spirit of the life and teaching of Socrates, to reproduce the Socratic "art of living," or to reduce to scientific system the various elements in the comprehensive thought of Socrates. This was due to two causes: (1) Socrates had not himself given them the clue to the systematic unity of his ideas; (2) the influence of the Sophists mingled with that of Socrates, and distorted the impression of

the latter's teaching. Hence each of the Schools insists upon a single aspect of the Socratic theory as if it were the whole.

The Cynic exaltation of Poverty results in a new externalism, a new subjection to circumstance: Virtue is impossible except in poverty. The indiscriminating protest against conventional and civic virtue, against civilisation and culture as artificial, leads to a crude Naturalism rather than to a spiritual or idealistic conception of life. The Cynic "wisdom" is devoid of practical significance: the elimination of Desire and Pleasure means the elimination of all objects of action, of all practical interests and ends. The result is an ideal of inaction, rather than of activity either theoretical or practical.

### § 11

Plato is the "complete Socratic." (1) Though sympathising with the Cynic ideal of the renunciation of Desire, which falls in with his metaphysical idealism, he insists upon the unity of virtue and pleasure. (2) He believes in the identity of the good man with the good citizen. The condemnation of Socrates, instead of leading him to despair of the State, or to substitute individualism or cosmopolitanism for patriotism, forces upon him the problem of the ideal State, of which the good (= wise) man will be not merely the citizen, but the statesman. His ideal is still that of the Greek City-State, but inspired by a larger Greek patriotism. (3) He accepts the conceptual method of Socrates, and by removing the Socratic limitation of that method to the ethical sphere, and looking for the universal apart from the particulars of sense in a world of pure thoughts, he develops a metaphysical idealism (or Realism as opposed

to Nominalism), finds the final clue to the essential reality of everything in the good or purpose which it serves, and predicates a supreme Good or Purpose at the heart of Reality as its ultimate characteristic and explanation.

### § 12

Plato regards the State as the expression of human nature, its three classes corresponding to the three parts of the soul, and consisting of those individuals in whom these parts are respectively predominant. Justice, therefore, consists in the right or natural relation of these elements to one another, in the *constitutional* action of the soul and of the State; injustice consists in *unconstitutional* action. (a) Justice is *natural*, in the sense that it is the rule of the naturally higher over the naturally lower elements, of those elements which are fit to rule over those which are fit only to obey. It consists in the rationalisation of natural impulse, not in its elimination, or even its minimisation; it is the harmonious, because rationally guided, life of all the elements of human nature. (b) When each element thus discharges its own peculiar function for the whole, the health or well-being of the whole is secured, the Good of man is realised. Justice is, therefore, incomparably more profitable than injustice, which means the insurrection of the naturally lower against the naturally higher elements, of the parts against the whole.

### § 13

A Cynic or Rationalistic tendency checks the Eudæmonism of Plato's ethical theory. (1) His metaphysical

Idealism leads to the condemnation of appetite as not merely in itself irrational and therefore needing the control of reason, but as incapable of being rationalised ; to the contrast of the pleasure which consists in the satisfaction of desire—as mere relief from the pain of unsatisfied want, and tying us to the world of sense and appearance,—with the real and positive pleasure of wisdom or philosophy, which brings us into contact with Reality. (2) His psychological separation of the rational from the irrational or appetitive, as well as from the non-rational or spirited element, leads him to think of the strictly rational life as that from which appetite and its satisfactions have been eliminated, as in the case of the Guardian class, whom private property and family ties would distract from devotion to the Good of the State. (3) His Intellectualism leads to the dualism of civic and philosophic virtue, the former being the expression of Opinion, the latter of Knowledge. The ideally good man is the philosopher, rather than the citizen even of the ideal State, the man of thought rather than the man of action. The higher virtue is not merely the expression of knowledge ; it *is* knowledge.

#### § 14

While Aristotle's Intellectualism is true, as against modern Practicalism or Utilitarianism, being virtually an assertion of the superiority of spiritual to merely material interests, his separation of the theoretic from the practical life, and his undue depreciation of the latter, are the result of his failure to appreciate the rational or ethical possibilities of the practical life, which he regards as essentially petty and unworthy of a rational being, because, as the life of appetite, it is tainted with

irrationality. This view is contrary to his own interpretation of practical activity as determined by "Wish" or "rational desire" (desire for the Good), as distinguished from mere appetite or desire, and his distinction between real and apparent good in the practical sphere, as well as to his assertion of the disinterestedness of true moral virtue. His failure to develop the full ethical implications of these statements arises (1) from his inadequate appreciation of the social possibilities of the practical life which, when interpreted as social service, is seen to be the medium of the realisation of the divine (self-sacrificing or loving) element in human nature; (2) from his doctrine of the dependence of practical activity upon external conditions; which, in turn, is due to an external and æsthetic estimate of action as the deed, rather than the choice or intention. The true measure of action is internal or spiritual; and when so measured, it is seen to be no less independent than thought. Here, too, Aristotle himself suggests the deeper view.

### § 15

While the Platonic and Aristotelian distinction between the life of civic, or moral, and philosophic, or intellectual virtue (with its depreciation of the ordinary life of appetition, even when regulated by rational principle, as essentially unworthy of man as a rational being, in comparison with the higher life of speculation) invites the reassertion of the antithesis between Hedonism and Rationalism, it is not in this sense that the alternative is stated by the post-Aristotelian schools. These are Socratic rather than Aristotelian, reasserting the antithesis between Virtue and Pleasure, already asserted

by the Cynics and Cyrenaics, and basing their ethical theory upon a metaphysic derived from pre-Socratic sources, the Stoics upon the Logos doctrine of Heraclitus, the Epicureans upon the Atomism of Democritus. The comparatively small influence of Aristotle's ethical thought, in the centuries immediately succeeding his death, is due chiefly to two causes: (1) The very comprehensiveness of his theory—his doctrine of the unity of Virtue and Pleasure (in spite of his dualism of moral and intellectual virtue, and therefore of the practical and the theoretic life), in respect of which he stands to the post-Aristotelian schools as Socrates to the incomplete Socratic schools, suggests to less comprehensive minds, in the one case as in the other, the assertion of the alternative—Virtue *or* Pleasure. (2) Aristotle's ideal or theoretic life does not appeal to an age which has lost the characteristic Greek love of speculation, and values knowledge only on account of its practical utility. The virtue or rationality of the Stoics is that of ordinary practical activity, and consists in the elimination of the passionate or appetitive element from the motives of action. The loss of interest in the life of the State, as well as in the speculative life, leads to a new sense of the importance of the individual, which finds expression in the substitution of the Stoic citizenship of the world and of the Epicurean principle of personal friendship for the characteristic Greek principle of patriotism, as the bond between individual and individual.

### § 16

The great contribution of the Stoics to ethical thought is the idea of Duty, or disinterested obedience to rational law, the recognition of the equal moral capability of all

men, and the universality of the claim of humanity upon the individual as a member of the ideal State or of the human family. The inadequacy of the Stoic ideal is seen (1) in the dualism of the Sage and the ordinary man, which repeats in a new form the ethical dualism of Plato and Aristotle, and implies the impossibility of realising the ideal in practice. (2) By their refusal to relate Duty to Good, or the variety of particular goods to the Good, through their condemnation of all objects of natural impulse as equally and finally worthless, and their rejection of all ends other than virtue itself, they fail to account for dutiful action, or for duties in the concrete. (3) Their indifferentism to all external goods or conditions leaves social duty unexplained, and their thorough-going optimism undermines their Humanitarianism. Their ideal is, logically if not practically, an ideal of inaction, rather than of action : there are no worthy or rational ends of action, since the ends of Reason are already completely attained. These inadequacies are practically confessed in the abandonment of Ideal Stoicism, as paradoxical and impracticable, and the modification of the theory in various essential points, to accommodate it to the necessities of practice.

### § 17

The Epicurean theory attempts to account for Virtue or Duty in terms of Pleasure as the only ultimate Good. In its account of the superiority of mental to bodily pleasures, of the value of Virtue, and especially of Friendship, the theory is consistently hedonistic : its Rationalism affects only its Method or Rule of life, not its Ideal ; only the Means, not the End. Its inadequacy is, however, no less obvious than its consistency. The

Epicurean Good, so far from explaining Duty, explains it away. (1) By reducing Duty to Expediency, and Altruism to Egoism, it negates the idea of Duty, and denies the claim of all ideal interests and enthusiasms. (2) It fails, equally with Stoicism, to give a theory of Action: its ideal is one of inaction, of withdrawal from the world, of leisure devoid of occupation. (3) To make Pleasure, even in the sense of escape from pain, our ideal, subjects us to the external, instead of making us independent of it: the Epicurean's flight from the world is a confession of his undying fear of it. (4) Such a merely subjective ideal practically defeats itself: the loss of objective interest and enthusiasm means misery, rather than happiness. The true rest and peace are to be found only in disinterested or enthusiastic activity. (5) The admission that, in practice, we must regard Virtue and Friendship as possessing intrinsic value, raises the question whether the theory itself is not, in its spirit and implications, idealistic. The nearer we approach to its ideal of Wisdom, the less possible does it become to ignore the logic of our conduct, and thus to practise Epicurean Virtue and attain the Epicurean Good.

### § 18

While Stoicism leaves Duty unexplained, regarding it as itself the Good, Epicureanism explains it away, by deriving it from a Good which negates it. Both miss the true function of Reason in its relation to Desire. The Stoics interpret that function as the annihilation of Desire as a motive of action, the Epicureans as the discovery of the best available means of satisfying Desire, or of escaping dissatisfaction. Both counsel the negation or minimisation of Desire, or natural impulse, as a



principle of action: their common ideal is insensibility, apathy, or indifference to external goods or goods of Desire. Reason's true function is the rationalisation of Desire: the only Good which will explain Duty is that which is the object of rational Desire. And Desire, as such, is incipiently rational—cf. Aristotle on "Wish" *vs.* Appetition. "Wish" or "Desire" implies an idea of "Good"—not simply want of an object.

### § 19

The centre of interest changes, in the post-Aristotelian period of Greek philosophy, from theory to practice, from the State to the individual; and the question of absorbing interest becomes that of the salvation of the individual. To this question a negative answer is given by both the ethical and the religious schools. The Stoics and Epicureans alike proclaim that rest and peace are to be reached through cessation from effort and action, while the Sceptics find the secret of peace in cessation from the futile effort of thought. The Mystics go still further in the same negative direction, and proclaim that the salvation of the individual consists in the loss of individuality, that the escape from the troubles of the world and the self consists in the discovery of the unreality of the world and the self alike, in the lapse of the finite self and its finite world into the Infinite, which alone really is.

### § 20

Christianity is concerned, like the later Greek schools, with the problem of the salvation of the individual; and, like them, it finds this salvation in the negation of

the world—a negation which means for it, as for Mysticism, the negation of the self. But its central idea of Incarnation represents a new point of view, that of the divine immanence, in man if not in the world, as opposed to the mystical idea of the mere transcendence of God. Hence the positive value of the individual as the medium of the divine self-revelation. The true life of the individual is not the selfless life but the life of the true or divine self. The Christian, like the Hebraic, conception of God being ethical, its conception of salvation is ethical—the filial obedience of the human will to the divine, the ethical, and therefore self-conscious, unity of man with God.

From its ethical character two important characteristics of Christianity follow: (1) It is not a merely individualistic principle. Since Christian virtue is essentially social or altruistic, the salvation of the individual is inseparable from that of society; the Christian ideal is that of a Kingdom of God, or a renewed Humanity. (2) This ideal is a practicable ideal, to be realised in action in the world, not in a life of communion with God apart from the world. That fellowship with man which is presupposed in fellowship with God is attained only in the life of social service. On the other hand, the “other-worldliness” or “transcendentalism” of Christianity, which has its source in the apocalyptic teaching of Jesus, has tended to depreciate the significance of the present life and the importance of social service.

### § 21

While Christianity opposes the ideal of Regeneration to the Greek ideal of mere Moderation or Temperance, its essential Asceticism is not to be exaggerated and misunderstood, as it is when it is assimilated to that of

Stoicism, Mysticism, or even Hebraism. It does not, like these, imply the final and absolute condemnation of the life of natural impulse, but merely its complete subordination to that spiritual good which consists in righteousness of purpose, the recognition of the merely instrumental value of all external goods. Thus interpreted, the Christian ideal is not the opposite of the Greek, the "reversal of all the moral values of the Pagan world"; its valuations are anticipated by Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, as well as by the Cynics and the Stoics. The real difference between the Christian and Greek morality consists (1) in the deeper interpretation of the significance of the alternative between internal and external, spiritual and natural good, as implying the negation of all the solicitations of natural impulse in order to its complete spiritualisation, the discovery of self-sacrifice as the condition of self-realisation, the accentuation of the negative or ascetic element in *all* goodness; (2) in its substitution of Love and Faith—a volitional and emotional attitude based upon a conviction of the supreme value and validity of Righteousness, purity of purpose, or harmony of the human with the divine Will—for the Greek principle of Wisdom or intellectual insight, as the condition of the best life; and its resulting subordination of the "theoretic" (intellectual and æsthetic) to the practical life, in which, as essentially social in character, it sees the medium of the highest spiritual possibilities.

## § 22

The chief spheres of Christian Asceticism or Idealism are Wealth, Industry, and the Family. (1) We find in the Gospels no condemnation of Wealth or idealisation

of Poverty as such. While wealth is regarded as a typical spiritual temptation, from which the poor are saved, it is only when taken as a final good, and not as an instrument of social service, that it becomes an evil. On the other hand, what is approved is either poverty of *spirit*, or that literal poverty which is the result of social use of wealth to supply the needs of our fellows. The principle of Communism is not proclaimed. (2) What is condemned is not Industry, as such, but that covetousness of spirit which attaches an undue value to material good, and that undue anxiety for the future which implies lack of faith in the fatherly providence of God. (3) While the domestic affections are to be subordinated, like all natural human affections, to the supreme interest of righteousness; and the willingness to sever the dearest human ties is made, like the willingness to give up wealth, the test of Christian discipleship, the sacredness of the Family as an institution is proclaimed with an absoluteness unknown to Greek and even to Hebrew ethics, and the Family supersedes the State as the supreme category of the moral life. The lack of interest in social institutions generally and in the concerns of the secular life, as such, is due (1) to preoccupation with the religious problem as the supreme, though not the exclusive, interest of human life; and (2) to the conviction that the present order of things is to be superseded in the immediate future by a new heavenly order.

### § 23

(1) Christianity substitutes charity or practical love—such a ministry to the needs, material and spiritual, of our fellows as implies sympathy or fellowship with the neediest and the worst—for the mere Liberality and

the exclusive Friendship of the good with the good, of Greek ethics. This ministry implies Humility, or the spirit of Service, as contrasted with Greek Highmindedness. (2) Christianity substitutes Philanthropy or Humanitarian virtue for the Patriotism and Civic virtue of the Greeks : non-resistance and forgiveness of injury for justice or retaliation ; the submission and endurance of the martyr for the courage of the soldier. The State is condemned as a worldly and merely natural relation. Its point of view, that of personal rights and self-assertion, is superseded by that of self-sacrificing love and service, and its Particularism by the Universalism of the Kingdom of Humanity.

#### § 24

Different as it is from Greek Patriotism, Christian Humanitarianism is not a reversal of Greek moral values. Greek patriotism is essentially altruistic, the disinterested devotion of the citizen to the good of the State. The civic virtues of courage and justice are truly altruistic ; and Friendship, though exclusive, is synonymous with human fellowship. Stoicism, like Christianity, substituted Humanitarianism for Patriotism. Christian altruism is Greek altruism (1) expanded so as to include fellow-men as well as fellow-citizens, and not merely the " civic " but all forms of social service ; (2) deepened so as to imply self-sacrificing or sympathetic social service, real fellowship with human need in every form. Christianity thus discovers a new vicarious meaning in suffering, which is seen to be not merely inevitable for the righteous in an unrighteous world, and a means of spiritual good to the sufferer himself, but the highest form of, and an element in all true social service.

## B.—INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIAL ETHICS

## § 1

## THE PROBLEM OF ETHICS, OR MORAL PHILOSOPHY

There are three sciences concerned with the study of man or self-knowledge : (1) Logic (and Metaphysics), the study of man as an intellectual being ; (2) *Æsthetics*, the study of man as an æsthetic being ; (3) Ethics, the study of man as a moral or active being—that is, as Will. These sciences investigate respectively the standard of Truth, of Beauty, and of Goodness, as the ultimate explanation of our intellectual, æsthetic, and moral judgments.

Will or Choice being synonymous with teleological or consciously purposive activity, the action being chosen as a means to some end or good beyond itself, the problem of Ethics is to discover the Chief End or the Good. Its subject-matter includes the whole life of Will, and therefore the life of intellect and feeling as well as that of action or practical activity.

The science of Ethics starts with the judgments of the ordinary Conscience or common sense, and seeks, by deepening its reflection, to explain these judgments in terms of the ultimate standard or ideal of conduct and character. We must not assume that it is also the function of Ethics, as it is that of the natural sciences, to correct and educate, and not merely, like Logic and *Æsthetics*, to explain the judgments of common sense.

## § 2

## DUTY AND INCLINATION

1. Duty is not simply obedience to prescribed rules, or social control, but self-control, the subordination of non-ideal impulses or "propensities" to ideal impulses. The propensity, originally the stronger motive, becomes the weaker, while the ideal, originally the weaker, becomes the stronger, through an effort of intellectual attention, an effort to conceive or think the action as it really is, rather than as it appears to be to the mind biassed by inclination. Undutiful action, on the other hand, is the result of unapplied or misapplied knowledge. In this sense virtue is the expression of knowledge, and vice of ignorance.

2. The repetition of similar acts of choice leads to the formation of corresponding habits of choice, or of a corresponding character, virtuous or vicious; and as the dutiful action becomes a virtuous habit, duty tends to coincide with permanent inclination, or disposition.

3. The progressive nature of the moral life implies the constant substitution of new for old ideals, and therefore the permanent antithesis of duty and inclination, and the constant necessity for fresh effort, in the life of the good man. Hence the distinction between duty and inclination, while in one sense a distinction of kind, is in another sense one of degree. The action may be more or less ideal; the ideal may be higher or lower. And the choice of the lower ideal is always, as such, the choice of evil, or undutiful action.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [Paragraphs 2 and 3 are a rearrangement of § 3 on pp. 134-5.]

## § 3

## THE SOCIAL CONSCIENCE

There are two stages in the growth of the social conscience or sense of duty to others : (1) that of the relatively immature conscience—of obedience to external rules, enforced by “external sanctions” or “pre-moral restraints” ; (2) that of the relatively mature conscience—(a) of obedience to self-imposed rules, enforced by the “internal sanction” of Conscience itself, the fear of the pain of remorse ; (b) disinterested obedience to principles or ideals, without the operation of sanctions, external or internal.

Society can only educate, it cannot create the social conscience. Man is naturally a conscientious being, capable of the sense of disinterested obligation. Nor is the individual wholly disinclined to act as social duty prescribes. He is naturally (a) sympathetic, (b) inclined to recognise and to respect the authority of society or of its representatives, (c) inclined to imitate his fellows ; and he acquires the inclination to act as society endeavours to induce him to act, (a) through the transference of the fear from the punishment associated with the action to the action or type of action itself, (b) through the formation of a settled disposition to act as society compels him to act.

Society educates or socialises the conscience of the individual : (1) by habituation to the forms of conduct which are conducive to its own good ; (2) by inducing him to think and feel, as well as to act, in ways conducive to its own good : (a) through his unconscious absorption of its standards and ideals ; (b) through its explicit inculcation of these standards and ideals.



## § 4

## DUTY AND VIRTUE

The distinction between Duty and Virtue is that the former refers to conduct, the latter to character. The action is dutiful or right ; the agent is virtuous or good. As Aristotle says, a man is not virtuous simply because he acts rightly, but because it is his nature to act rightly, because such action has become habitual, and therefore easy and pleasant. But it is only by acting rightly or dutifully, with effort, that is, by doing our duty to the best of our ability, that we acquire virtue, the ability to act rightly without effort. Character is the product of conduct, and conduct in turn is the expression of character. Moral progress is from Duty to Virtue, from "*Do this*" to "*Be this*."

There is, therefore, no difference in content between Duty and Virtue. (1) Even the distinction between Duty, as that which is within our power, and Virtue, as that which is beyond our power, is only a relative distinction, since we can cultivate virtuous habits, or acquire new capacities of action, and what we *can* do we *ought* to do.

(2) The distinction between Duty, as imperative, and Virtue, as optional, is in reality the distinction between lower and higher levels of Duty, the former or average level of moral attainment being required of the individual by his society, the latter or ideal level being required of him by his own conscience or his ideal self.

## § 5

## MOTIVE AND INTENTION

An "action," as the subject of moral judgment, is not the mere external deed or achievement, but a choice or an activity of Will. Its elements, therefore, are the motive and the intention; and it is with the rightness or wrongness of these that moral judgment is concerned. The motive being the desire of the end, and the intention the choice of the means to this end, the problem of Ethics is: Is the key to the moral value of the action or choice to be found in the intention or in the motive? Are we to look at the action as a series of intended acts, or as a teleological whole, the realisation of a single purpose? Are we to judge it formally or teleologically? Does the end justify the means? The answer to this question divides the moralists into two schools, the formalists and the teleologists or utilitarians. The former regards rightness as a formal quality of the choice or intention, and therefore as absolute. The latter regards it as determined by the consequences, so far as these are foreseen, desired, and chosen for realisation; that is, by ends or ideals; and therefore as relative. The ideal of the former is a perfect, disinterested, or dutiful obedience to absolute moral laws; that of the latter, the adoption of the best means to the best ends. To the former, goodness is itself the Good; to the latter, goodness is only a means to the Good, or Happiness.

## § 6

## THE ANSWERS TO HOBBS

Hobbes had enunciated a doctrine of ethical and political relativism, founded upon an egoistic theory of human nature, the State being the only deliverance from the misery of the "state of nature," and the will of the sovereign the only standard of right and wrong. The answer to Hobbes, accordingly, takes two forms, both formalistic: (1) that of the rationalists, Cudworth and Clarke, who maintain that "morality is the nature of things," the expression of rational and, therefore, necessary relations, not of the will of the sovereign, or even of God; (2) that of the "moral sense" school or "æsthetic intuitionists," Shaftesbury, Hutcheson, and Butler, who hold that morality is the expression of human nature and that man is naturally a social or benevolent, not an exclusively selfish being. This school is engaged, therefore, in a double polemic, (a) against the rationalism of Cudworth and Clarke, (b) against the egoism of Hobbes.

Hume is a member of the "moral sense" school, and is engaged in the same double polemic. He, too, (a) explains morality in terms of human nature, and formulates more explicitly the doctrine of psychological relativism, (b) insists upon the social nature of man, upon the naturalness of sympathy or "humanity." He differs, however, from his predecessors in explaining the judgments of the moral sense in terms of utility and in accepting a definitely hedonistic theory of the good. While there are survivals of the formalism of the moral sense school in Hume's ethics, his theory is, on the whole, teleological or utilitarian and hedonistic.

## § 7

Hume attempts to explain the merit of virtue in terms of (a) utility, (b) immediate agreeableness—that is, indirect or direct conduciveness to the happiness, either of the agent himself or of others. But (1) in the case of the “social virtues,” benevolence and justice, he admits that only a part of the former virtue can be reduced to social utility, while the other part pleases in spite of its uselessness; and in the case of the latter he confines his argument to the narrow sense of the rights of private property. (2) The merit or value of the qualities which are useful to the agent himself is not explained if we ignore their intrinsic worth. (3) Among the qualities which he would explain as immediately agreeable to the agent himself are those which please the beholders because of their “peculiar lustre,” “noble elevation,” or “sublimity.” (4) In the case of the qualities immediately agreeable to others, the question arises, *Why* they please, and the answer of Hume is that of the “moral sense” school, Because they appeal to “the blind, but sure, testimony of taste and sentiment.”

A further indication of the inadequacy of Hume’s explanation of the merit of virtue is his denial of merit to the qualities of self-denial and humility, because of their lack of utility or agreeableness, and his admission that reverence for humanity and the attainment of “perfection” constitute the essence of virtue.

His reduction of moral obligation to self-interest contradicts the spirit of his theory of social virtue as founded on a disinterested sentiment of humanity or benevolence.

## § 8

To his successors Hume seemed, like Hobbes, to have explained away, rather than to have explained, our moral judgments. He had shown the implications of "moral sense" Formalism to be (a) Utilitarianism, (b) Subjectivism or psychological Relativism, and had thus derationalised our moral, no less than our intellectual, judgments. As he had traced our so-called "knowledge" to mere custom, so he had traced our morality to mere sentiment or taste. His ethical theory, therefore, called forth a reassertion of the rational version of Formalism.

(a) Hume's Utilitarianism implies that the value of virtue or goodness is only instrumental, as a means to Happiness, one's own or that of others. The answer of Rationalism is that goodness, not happiness, is the ultimate end or good, and to make goodness a means to happiness is to destroy goodness. (b) Hume's doctrine that Sentiment, not Reason, is the basis of moral distinctions implies that certain qualities of action and character (= virtues) are "immediately agreeable" to us, or please us, because we are so constituted as to approve of these qualities. The answer of Rationalism is that the distinction is one of Reason, not of Sentiment or Taste, and has, therefore, absolute, and not merely relative, validity.

This answer to Hume takes two forms: (1) the "Common Sense" Intuitionism of Reid; (2) the Transcendentalism of Kant.

Reid's question is: How are our moral, like our intellectual, judgments possible? His answer is that these judgments are the application of certain first principles, indemonstrable because self-evident and the basis of all demonstration; and that it is impossible

to unify these principles, because they are all equally ultimate. As rational beings we see, or are capable of seeing, that certain forms of action are right, and to ask why they are right is an unmeaning question.

## § 9

### SCOTTISH INTUITIONISM OR "COMMON SENSE"

The Scottish Intuitionists identify the ordinary conscience or moral "Common Sense" with the Practical Reason, and therefore regard its laws or principles as unconditionally obligatory. These principles are first principles of Reason, and therefore indemonstrable; they are self-evident, matter of intuition, and the basis of all demonstration. We cannot explain them, or show why it is right to obey the moral laws thus intuitively apprehended.

But (1) the ordinary conscience is not so formalistic as the Intuitionists would have us believe. It takes account of the circumstances and consequences of action, and solves the otherwise insoluble problem of the conflict of duties by allowing exceptions to its rules. It is true, however, that (a) it forgets the exceptions, and regards the moral laws as unconditionally obligatory; (b) such forgetfulness is *practically* desirable; and (c) some consciences are so formalistic that they refuse to make any exceptions.

(2) The Intuitionist view is unhistorical. It regards the conscience of the individual as constant and invariable, forgetting that it has a history and is dependent on society for its education. Its laws, though intuitive to the individual, are generalisations from social experience of the results of conduct. They are,

as Mill suggests, secondary principles or "middle axioms," not first principles.

(3) The moralist cannot accept the principles of the ordinary unreflective conscience or moral Common Sense as ultimate or first principles of ethical science. His function is to explain these principles by developing the implicit teleology of the ordinary conscience; he must prove the rationality of the moral laws by their unification or systematisation, and the only possible unifying principle is some ultimate End or Good. The Intuitionist version of Formalism must give place to Teleology.

### § 10

#### KANT'S "METAPHYSICAL" METHOD

Kant insists upon the necessity of adopting a metaphysical, *a priori*, or purely rationalistic method in Ethics, as against (1) the "popular philosophy" of Common Sense; (2) the empirical, psychological, or humanistic method of Hume.

(1) He is dissatisfied with the Rationalism of the Scottish Intuitionists. The "common reason" or ordinary conscience tells us what is right, but not why it is right. It is liable to sophistication by inclination, since it knows not how to vindicate its own supremacy, how to prove the superiority of the claim of goodness to that of happiness. To secure the claims of goodness against the counter-claims of happiness, the claims of duty against the counter-claims of inclination, we must investigate the nature of the Practical Reason, substitute philosophical criticism for the dogmatism of the common reason, or make the transition from popular moral philosophy to a metaphysic of morals.

(2) That the true method of Ethics cannot be the empirical or humanistic, he proves by three arguments : (a) Experience does not yield a single certain example of goodness or of a truly dutiful action ; what it does yield is certain examples of badness or undutiful action, of the use (= abuse) of reason as the servant of inclination rather than as its master, of the subordination of goodness to happiness rather than of that of happiness to goodness. (b) We cannot derive from human nature laws valid for all rational beings, and for man as a rational being, but only laws valid for human beings or beings similarly constituted. (c) Even if there were certain examples of goodness, they would have to be tested by reference to principles : we must have a reason for imitating them.

Such a truly rationalistic account of the nature of goodness has the utmost practical, as well as theoretic value

## § 11

Kant's ethical system begins and ends in Teleology.

1. The good will is the supreme, because the only unconditional, but not the sole good. There are also all the goods or ends of Desire, summed up in Happiness, which is a good, though not so good as goodness. Kant never condemns Desire, as such, or Happiness, as such. The hypothetical imperatives are not invalidated or superseded by the categorical imperative. It is only as the rivals of the supreme good that the other goods are condemned ; it is only as the rivals of the categorical imperative that the hypothetical imperatives are invalidated.

2. Self-love, or regard for our Happiness as a whole, is part of our Duty : prudence is part of virtue.



3. There is a rational, as well as a merely sentient, satisfaction, found in the attainment of a rational end, that is, goodness.

4. The ultimate explanation of the unconditional imperativeness or obligatoriness of the moral law is found in the unconditional good which it prescribes to us, in personality as an end-in-itself; and the explanation of the possibility of the disinterested obedience of the really dutiful will is found in its Autonomy, in the fact that the law of duty is the law of man's own nature—an end-in-itself is a law-unto-itself. The imperative of duty, therefore, finally runs: Act as a legislating member of the Kingdom of Ends, and by so acting, do what in you lies to realise that ideal society: *place* all your particular ends in that inclusive system of ends.

## § 12

In spite of the presence of teleology throughout Kant's ethics, culminating in the final form of the imperative of morality: "Act as a legislating member of a possible kingdom of ends," the formalistic tendency always reasserts itself. (1) The ideal or divine life is one of pure reason without desire, not one of rationalised desire. (2) There is no suggestion of the possibility of educating desire. An action may be equally dutiful, whether done with, without, or against inclination. (3) He insists upon the unconditional or categorical imperativeness of the several moral laws, and it is this feature of duty that he sets himself to explain. But (*a*) the validity of these laws is general, not universal. The true criterion is the validity of the principle of action for all *in the same circumstances* as the agent. The exception is not made in the agent's own favour, but is equally valid for all

such. (b) What follows from the identification of the unconditional good with humanity or personality is not the universal validity of the moral laws, but the imperativeness of the means to this end ; and these vary with the circumstances and with the concrete ends of other persons with which the individual identifies himself. (4) Kant's distinction between the supreme and the complete good, between goodness itself and goodness completed or rewarded by God with the happiness of which it has shown itself to be worthy by not seeking it as its supreme good, shows Kant's blindness to the organic or intrinsic relation of happiness to goodness, or the attractiveness, as well as the imperativeness, of goodness to the good man. The truly good man is the man who finds his happiness or satisfaction in acting rightly.

### § 13

#### THE TRUTH IN ETHICAL RATIONALISM

1. The distinction between Persons and Things, the former alone being ultimate ends, the latter means. The imperative of duty, therefore, runs : Make everything instrumental to personality, whether in yourself or in any other person ; subordinate all other ends, as means, to this one ultimate End or Good ; treat the ends which persons *have* as merely means to Ends which, as persons, they *are*.

2. The conception of a Kingdom of Ends, or an ideal human society organised on this law or principle. The imperative of duty, therefore, runs : Do what in you lies to realise this ideal society—that is, to make all other ends means to this supreme End. All the other imperatives, all specific duties, are merely hypothetical, pre-

scribing the means to this end, means which vary with the circumstances.

3. The rationalisation, spiritualisation, or education of Desire means its discipline, its negation as *mere* Desire. Desire must be taken up into the Self, and made an element in its life ; its ends must become the means to the one ultimate End, the realisation of personality ; desire must be made the servant of the rational or spiritual Self. This spiritualisation of desire means that natural impulse or propensity must die that it may be reborn as spiritual desire. For a rational or spiritual being to act as a merely natural being, for man to act as the animal acts, is to act wrongly, because irrationally. Self-realisation implies self-denial or self-renunciation. Such self-denial is the path to self-realisation, *the* means to the one ethical End. The imperative of duty, therefore, finally runs : Thou shalt not live as a merely natural being, following the promptings of natural impulse, but as a spiritual being, educating and disciplining these impulses so as to make them elements in the life of the human spirit.

#### § 14

### THE TRUTH AND ERROR IN ETHICAL HEDONISM

The Good is the satisfactory, what satisfies human or rational desire. Human happiness or satisfaction is not man's Good, but its index or criterion, the mark by which he knows it, the *ratio cognoscendi*, not the *ratio essendi*, of the Good.

Hedonism is led to identify the Good with satisfaction or happiness by confusing (1) the meaning of the term "good" with the nature or content of the Good, (2) the satisfying object with the satisfaction.

(1) By "the Good" we *mean* the ultimately satisfactory, what satisfies man as man. The question of Ethics, therefore, remains: What *is* the Good? What is it that satisfies man as man? The answer to this question clearly cannot be Satisfaction; for this would be to say that "Satisfaction satisfies."

(2) Ethical Hedonism makes the same mistake as Psychological Hedonism: Because the Good is what satisfies, it is satisfaction. As what we desire is not satisfaction but objects which satisfy us because we desire them, so the Good or Desirable, the ultimate object of human desire, satisfies us because it is what above all we desire.

The Good is what satisfies the whole human Self, and this can only be the life, activity, or realisation of the whole human Self. Man's sources of satisfaction are different from those of the animal's satisfaction, and he prefers his own human level of existence to that of the animal, the life of his own Self to that of the animal self. "It is better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied."

## § 15

### THE RELATIONS OF REASON AND DESIRE

The common error of Hedonism and Rationalism is the dualism and separation of these inseparable elements of the human soul. Hedonism, identifying the Good with the satisfaction of Desire, assigns to Reason a merely ministerial function, the discovery of the means to this end. But the Good of man, as a rational being, must be constituted by Reason, and not merely by Desire. Rationalism equally disallows Desire any voice in the determination of the Good: seeing in pleasure or

satisfaction the only possible object of Desire, it regards the ends of Desire as all alike non-moral or irrational, and incapable of being moralised or rationalised. But there are higher as well as lower desires: Desire is more or less rational. And all Desire is rational in the sense that its object is conceived as good or worthy of desire. It is, therefore, capable of complete rationalisation; its education consists in the actualisation of its potential rationality. For idealism the Good is what satisfies human or rational Desire; and this is the realisation of the human or fundamentally rational self.

## § 16

### SELF-REALISATION AS A SOCIAL GOOD

1. The Good, conceived as Self-realisation, is a social, not an egoistic Good. (a) The ideal is a "kingdom of ends," the complete self-realisation of all persons or of an ideal society, not simply that of the individual agent. (b) The specifically human desires are not animal appetites, but result from our social relations, and these relations therefore determine our duties. (c) The true or higher is distinguished from the false or lower self by its comprehensiveness, as well as by its coherence or systematic organisation; the former is the social, the latter the selfish self.

2. But the Good, thus conceived, though social, is not a Common Good. (a) It is personal, not impersonal; the realisation of the self by the self; the concrete, not the abstract universal; a distributive, not a collective Good. (b) There is a higher, as well as a lower, Individualism, an individualism of the higher as well as of the lower self. While the whole life of the self is a

life of Will, and therefore "moral" in the narrower sense, we must distinguish the "theoretic" or contemplative life of thought and feeling from the "practical" life of action, and complete self-realisation must include both. The former is non-social; and social service, while it realises the "moral" self in the good will, may demand the sacrifice of the other elements of the higher self. The theoretic life is competitive, so far as the means are concerned, and the complete self-realisation of all calls for a social service which implies the incomplete self-realisation of the individual. Hence the "supremacy of conscience," or of the claim of the "moral" self, or the good will, upon the individual, which is the claim of the whole self of all.

## § 17

### SOCIETY AND THE INDIVIDUAL

A Society is not the mere sum or aggregate of its members, but an "organic" unity or whole, determined by a common, permanent, and fundamental purpose.

But Society is not in the literal sense an organism (1) because it consists of individuals, and has no common centre of consciousness; (2) because it exists for the sake of the individual in a more ultimate sense than the individual exists for its sake. The individual is an end-in-himself, and society a kingdom of ends.

It follows (1) that the individual is not a mere "servant" of society or social functionary, but has a right to participate in the good to which he contributes. In the performance of his peculiar function for the society as a whole, therefore, the individual ought to attain

his own good ; specialisation of function ought to imply the fulfilment of individual vocation, and therefore the self-realisation of the individual. (2) That the individual has a variety of functions corresponding to the various societies of which he is a member, and must not be limited to any one of these functions.

Hence the problem of Social Ethics—the correlation of the individual and society—is at the same time the problem of the correlation of the various societies, and, more particularly, that of the State with the other societies.

## § 18

### DEFINITIONS OF THE STATE

*Bentham* : “ When a number of persons (whom we may style subjects) are supposed to be in the habit of paying obedience to a person, or an assemblage of persons, of a known and certain description (whom we may call governor or governors), such persons altogether (subjects and governors) are said to be in a state of political society.”

*Seeley* : “ The community held together by government.”

*Sidgwick* : Politics deal with “ governed societies regarded as possessing government—that is, societies of which the members are accustomed to obey, at least in certain matters, the directions given by some person or body of persons forming part of the society.” “ A State is an independent society of human beings, living in a certain degree of civilised order, and united by obedience to a common government, which exercises supreme control over a certain territory.”

*Green* : “ The State is the complex of those social

relations out of which rights arise, so far as those rights have come to be regulated and harmonised according to a general law, which is recognised by a certain multitude of persons, and which there is sufficient power to secure against violation from without and from within. The other forms of community which precede and are independent of the formation of the State, do not continue to exist outside it, nor yet are they superseded by it. They are carried on into it. They become its organic members, supporting its life and in turn maintained by it in a new harmony with each other. . . . Nor can the citizen have any right against the State, in the sense of a right to act otherwise than as a member of some society, the State being for its members the society of societies, the society in which all their claims upon each other are mutually adjusted."

*Bosanquet* : "Society as a unit, recognised as rightly exercising control over its members through absolute physical power." "The society which is recognised as exercising compulsory power over its members. Without such power, or where, if anywhere, it does not exist, there can be no effective adjustment of the claims of individuals, and of the various groups in which individuals are involved." "That society, then, is a State which is habitually recognised as a unit lawfully exercising force": it is "society armed with force."

We may sum up for ourselves thus : The State is the community governmentally organised, compelling its members to act as members of it, and adjusting the claims of individuals and of other societies upon one another. It is thus the presupposition of, or the indispensable means to, all those forms of Good, or Well-living, which constitute the ends of the other societies. It alone has the right to use force ; but its action is



not, therefore, exclusively coercive and negative. It may persuade and encourage, as well as compel and punish.

### § 19

#### THE FUNCTIONS OF THE STATE

1. The primary function of the State is not to make its citizens good : its law and order are not intended to coincide with the moral law and order. Alike in its punishment of crime and in its reparation of civil injury it seeks, by preventing wrong, to provide security for all. Its maintenance of law and order is at the same time the protection of the fundamental rights of the individual—to life, liberty, and property. Its method is force, which it alone, as a sovereign or independent society, is entitled to use within its own territory.

2. Its basis is not force but will, the “general will” of its citizens ; and its action is not exclusively negative and coercive. It seeks to promote the ethical or spiritual well-being of its citizens : (1) indirectly, through the other societies, which depend upon it for their security ; (2) directly, through “education” in the large Greek sense—intellectual, æsthetic, and even moral. It is not possible to distinguish the removal of obstacles from the provision of opportunities, and the State may encourage as well as compel. Its function is (a) so to subordinate the economic to the moral life as to make the former serve the interests of the latter ; (b) to secure economic justice, or the distribution of wealth in accordance with desert, economic if not moral.

## § 20

## THE STATE AND OTHER SOCIETIES

The real problem of the ethical functions of the State is not that of the relation of the State to the individual, but that of its relation to the other societies or the minor social groups. The individual is always a member of several of these, and the question is, What is the limiting principle of the State's rightful interference with them, rather than with him? The Hegelian reassertion of the Greek claim that the State is the medium of the complete expression of the human spirit is inadmissible. Man's spiritual nature points beyond the State for its fulfilment, and makes him a "citizen of the world." Even Plato and Aristotle refused to identify the good man with the good citizen, recognising in the "philosophic" or "theoretic" life a possibility of goodness different from and higher than "civic" or "moral" goodness, while Plato's ideal man, even in the sphere of ordinary morality, was the citizen, not of the actual, but of the ideal State.

The source of this exaggerated claim for the State is the confusion of the State with Society itself, and of its *coercion* with the more educative *suggestion* of the national spirit, as a means to the highest human well-being.

The true ethical function of the State is the maintenance of social justice, the security of the rights of each society, or of its freedom within its own sphere, and the prevention of its transcending that sphere and encroaching on the rightful sphere of other societies and of the individual as a member of these—*e.g.*, when the Church tries to *coerce* the individual; when the employer tries

to *exploit* the individual; when the Trade Union tries to *coerce* the individual. For the State is *the* means to εὖ ζῆν generally. It must therefore see that the *other* means *are* means to this end, while it must leave them free as means.

## § 21

### THE IDEA OF NATURAL RIGHT

The solution of the problem of the reconciliation of Force with Will, Authority with Liberty, has been attempted by conceiving the State as the result of a "social contract." If the individual is to recognise in the laws of the State the expression of his own will, the State itself, it would seem, must be the result of a contract between individuals naturally free and equal. The basis of political rights, therefore, is found in the "natural rights" of the individual. The antithesis between natural and political or conventional Right or Law originates in the distinction, common to the Cynics and Stoics with the Sophists, between "nature" and "convention." This distinction was developed by the Roman jurists and moralists, through the identification of the "law of nature" with the "law of nations," common to all, which thus became the ideal system of Law and Right to which the actual system more or less approximated. The modern revival of the idea of Natural Right leads to the insistence on the artificial or contractual character of all legal rights, and even of the State itself. Of this idea the American and French Revolutions were the practical, and the "social contract" view of the State and of political obligation, the theoretic, expression.

## § 22

## THE SOCIAL CONTRACT THEORY

The essential principle of the "social contract" theory is the sovereignty of the individual will. But this may mean either the actual or the true (ideal or "general") will of the individual. The former is the error, the latter the truth in the theory. (1) Its fundamental error is its Individualism. It regards the unpolitical and unsocial or mere individual as the ultimate ethical unit and reality, and the maintenance of his "natural rights" as the ultimate end of political existence. But such a mere individual has no rights. (2) The recognition of the basis of political obligation in the "general will," as distinguished from the "will of all," implies the abandonment of the Individualism which underlies the theory of a "social contract," and the explanation of the Authority of the State by reference to the End to which it is a means—namely, the best life of the individual, the life of true personality, as distinguished from that of mere individuality. The true meaning of "natural" is "that which man is born *for*," not "that which he is born *as*." The true meaning of "natural right" is the right of the individual to realise his true or ideal, that is, his social nature; the true "laws of nature" are those in obeying which he realises this ideal nature; the true "natural rights" are those which would be recognised and enforced in an ideal political society. Political obligation is the obligation of the ethical or social Self and its Good (= a social or common Good).

## § 23

NATIONALITY AS THE PRINCIPLE OF POLITICAL  
ORGANISATION

The modern ideal of Nationality has superseded the mediæval ideal of the Unity of Western or Christian Civilisation, which was a revival of the Roman ideal of a World-State, reinforced by the Christian ideal of the Brotherhood of Man. For the Holy Roman Empire remained a mere ideal, impotent to enforce its will for peace among the warring States, and gave place at the Renaissance to the classical idea of the sovereignty of the individual State, to which Luther, like Machiavelli, conceded freedom from moral obligation.

The basis of Nationality is not a community of race, language, religion, or territory, but a common memory and will, a "feeling of unity" which is the result of common effort in the past, and finds expression in the will to live a common life in the future, to forget what divides and to remember only what unites, to perpetuate the "historic individuality" of a people.

As individual self-realisation is the condition of national good, national self-realisation is the condition of international good. Nations, like individuals, are mutually dependent. Hence the ideal of nationality gives rise to that of internationalism, which supersedes the mediæval ideal of cosmopolitanism or the universal State. The true relations of States to one another are determined by International Law, which formulates the moral obligations of the State, and harmonises Nationalism with Internationalism.

## § 24

## STATESMANSHIP AND MORALITY

The State is an ethical institution in the sense that it is *the* means to the ethical well-being of the community and, therefore, of the individual, not an end-in-itself above morality. The ideal statesman, therefore, is the Hebrew Prophet or Seer, who insists upon the claims of righteousness in the life of the State. But public is not identical with private morality, that of the statesman or agent of the State with that of the individual in his private relations. "Reasons of State," though not final, are necessary considerations in determining the conduct of the former, and their operation implies a freer attitude to ordinary moral rules than can be conceded to the latter. But the *principle* is the same in both cases, that there are exceptions to every rule; the exceptions are made in both cases in the interests of morality itself; and the temptation of self-interest is not operative in the case of the statesman. Machiavelli's error is in making the exception the rule, and thus denying the validity of moral laws, so far at least as the State is concerned. The cardinal virtue of the statesman is disinterested devotion to the good of the State. But other States have claims upon the individual State, and its conduct ought to be guided by consideration of these claims. Machiavelli, by ignoring them, especially demoralises international relations. The view of man, which he shares with Hobbes, as an unsocial or purely selfish being, must be exchanged for that of Grotius, that man is naturally social, and a member of the larger society of nations as well as of the narrower society of his own individual State.

## § 25

## THE STATE AND POVERTY

So far as its causes are social and industrial, social justice implies the prevention of Poverty, through the rectification by the State of the economic evils of which it is the result. In so far as its causes are individual and moral, its relief and cure, in the individual case, is the duty of philanthropic or charitable effort on the part of the individual. A causal treatment must take account of all the causes, and of their mutual relations. The moral are inseparable from the economic causes ; to isolate either is to make progress impossible. But the order of the causes must also be recognised, the priority of the economic to the moral causes, of the lower to the higher needs and satisfactions. The condition of the higher life of the individual is a certain measure of material comfort, and of leisure from industrial labour ; and the State ought to provide every individual with this opportunity of the higher life. Social justice, in this sense, is an obligation prior to philanthropy or charity, public or private ; the dependence which the latter implies is an additional injustice to the individual rather than a true reparation of the original injustice.

## § 26

## PUNISHMENT

The retributive theory of punishment is at best a partial account of its origin, rather than a true account of its essential nature and purpose. The blind passion

of vindictiveness or retaliation cannot be rationalised even by being socialised. The theory results from: (1) an abstract individualism, which finds it necessary to establish the right of the State to punish from the point of view of the mere individual rather than from that of the common good; (2) the confusion of penal with reparative justice, of crime with civil injury, of punishment with compensation. Punishment is not an end-in-itself, but a means of social protection from criminal or anti-social conduct on the part of the individual. The truth in the retributive theory is that punishment is the expression of social disapprobation of crime, or anti-social conduct, as such. This truth is formulated in Butler's distinction between "resentment" and "malice," and in Hegel's conception of retribution as not revenge or the satisfaction of the desire for retaliation, but the completion of the criminal action, cancelling itself, and thus reaffirming the moral and social order of which it is the breach. The preventive or deterrent theory includes the reformation of the criminal as the best means to the end of social protection from the actions in which the criminal character finds its expression. Such a reformation or education of character springs from the recognition of the justice of the punishment.





PROFESSOR SETH—AS SUCH.

## APPENDIX A

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### PROFESSOR JAMES SETH AND HIS CLASSROOM

(From 'The Student,' March 6, 1908)

WERE a stranger to visit the Old Quadrangle he would find in the Moral Philosophy Classroom a lack of convention and a keenness of intellectual atmosphere strangely different from what prevails in the majority of Arts classes. From the librarian, who seats himself at his table in front of the class, and magnifies his office by an apparently rapt immersion in the multifarious duties of his position, down to the humblest occupant of the benches, each and every moral philosopher seems struggling with some weighty and recondite problem, and, instead of unburdening his soul in those vocal efforts which form the usual prelude to a class in Arts, spends the few minutes prior to the Professor's entrance in an animated discussion of Aristotle's theoretic life. Indeed, so keen are the men and so attractive the class that it is almost inexplicable how a lately adopted rule of "No admittance after five minutes past the hour" has been instrumental in debarring any gentleman from attendance. This keenness may, in some measure, be due to the fact that most members of the class are in the closing year of their University course; it is due in far greater measure to the personality of Professor James Seth. . . .

Perhaps it is not entirely fanciful to trace in his American experience some of those qualities which have rendered so successful his teaching here. So far

as may be, Professor Seth discourages note-taking, and in its place dictates a summary of the salient features of his lecture. Nor is his rule a mere counsel of perfection honoured equally in the breach as in the observance. As the studious member of the class, whose eye is directed steadily towards a medal that is very far off, is not slow to learn, the Professor is wonderfully acute in detecting what he calls "surreptitious" note-taking, and, having detected, is no respecter of persons. Instead, therefore, of the mechanical scribbling of somnolescent note-takers—which is the ordinary characteristic of Arts classes so far as note-takers exist therein at all—Professor Seth adopts a method which enchains his hearers by the vital power of the spoken word, and thereby adds immensely to the interest and the value of his teaching. Touched as his expression is with a distinct literary flavour—as when his plaintive emphasis upon the death of Socrates draws tears from the eyes of every fair occupant of the front benches—the interest of the instruction is throughout well sustained.

And there is another feature of the class which amazingly enhances this interest. The Professor does not do all the talking, but discusses with the class. The cause of the discussion is quite informal and incidental—a controversial position in a lecture, a knotty point in Aristotle or Kant—but wherever a student is distressed by a doubt, or thinks he has valid objections to the Professor's position, he has a standing invitation to state his difficulty; and in these informal discussions lie the life and body of the class. Nor is there any constraint during their course on the side either of student or professor. If the subtleties of an ethical theory—and what ethical theory is free from subtlety?—are repugnant or unconvincing to the unsophisticated consciousness, then the unsophisticated consciousness says so boldly and unhesitatingly, and only in an atmosphere of this sort can thought hope to progress.

Although in addition to these skirmishes the class has a field-day or two in its annual course—or, to put it otherwise, indulges in a full-fledged debate with leaders and set speeches and everything except a Speaker's wig and a suffragette's petition—yet in the writer's opinion

it is these informal discussions which form the most distinctive feature of the class and yield in no small measure the secret of its educative influence. Indeed, in his Honours Class—so they tell us who have gone before us and penetrated its sacred mysteries—the Professor relies almost exclusively upon this method. But there are two other aspects of Professor Seth's interest in University men and University life which call for mention within the limits of this article. The first is his interest in University debating societies seen alike in his delivery of their introductory addresses, his attendance at their social functions, and his willingness to be chairman at the public demonstrations even of an infant body like the Fabian Society. And secondly, we must note the way in which he devotes certain stated hours to meeting his students in the retiring-room, and there continuing discussions with them which had proved too ample for the limits of an hour. Here, again, it may be, we have an example of the influence of America, but whatever their source, we see in such traits as these that it is the man, and not merely the professor, who devotes himself to the interests of University life.

## APPENDIX B

## TWO GRADUATION ADDRESSES

## 1. ADDRESS TO THE GRADUATES AT THE GRADUATION CEREMONIAL, APRIL 14, 1900.

FELLOW-GRADUATES,—It is my pleasant duty, in the name of the Senatus, to offer you their hearty congratulations upon the new dignity to which you have just been promoted, upon the successful completion, which your graduation implies, of the course of study in which you have been engaged since you entered the University, and upon the happy auspices under which you to-day set out on the new and untried future. With the joyful satisfaction of accomplishment and the bright hope of the future there cannot but mingle, both on your side and on ours, something of the sadness of farewell. There are, it is true, some aspects of University life which you cannot be sorry to leave behind. To-day's ceremony indicates that you have come safely through the prolonged and trying ordeal of class and degree examinations; and to have done with these it were not human to regret. But there are other, and more essential, aspects of University life—one aspect, in particular, perhaps less prominent, but no less really present, in our Scottish Universities than elsewhere—I mean the social aspect. There is no society just like that of the University, none quite so generous, so enthusiastic, so unworldly, so intellectual, so friendly. I know that the friendships you have formed here will continue,

many of them, to the end of life ; it is needless to urge you to cherish them among the best fruits of your residence here. But the social atmosphere of the University itself can hardly be reproduced outside its walls ; and one could wish that the beautiful and touching custom which obtains at the American Universities, of an annual or occasional reunion of old students, returning to their Alma Mater on what they finely call her Commencement Day, and joining in the graduation procession, as I have seen them, from the grave and revered seniors whose graduation is a memory, never allowed to grow dim, of thirty or forty or fifty years, down to the young graduates of yesterday and of to-day—one could wish, for the sake of the University and for the sake of its graduates, that some such custom obtained among ourselves. But whether you come back or not, I would remind you that you are, from this day, members in the fullest sense of the University of Edinburgh, and it is my privilege, in the name of the University, to welcome you to its full membership. It is also my duty to remind you of the new responsibilities implied in such membership. The real life of the University is distributed throughout the Empire and beyond. Wherever a graduate of the University is found, there is the University. We, your teachers here, your fellow-graduates, and your fellow-countrymen, will look to you to maintain the honour and the prestige of the University in all your future work.

As you go forth to that work, what is it that you carry with you as the permanent gain of your college life ? A University exists for the discovery and diffusion of truth. As far as its teaching is concerned, however, it is not so much the communication of a certain amount of knowledge as the formation of a certain habit of mind, of a certain type of intellectual character, that constitutes the chief duty of the University to its students. It is this habit of mind, this intellectual character, that you ought to carry with you, and to see that you do not lose. Forget, if you like, the details of the knowledge you have acquired here—you will not be examined on them again—but preserve the habit of mind. Life itself is the examiner here, and none can escape its keen

scrutiny. Within the University almost everything makes for the upbuilding and maintenance of this habit; outside almost everything makes against it. What is the academic habit of mind, in the best sense of the term? Is it not the love of truth for its own sake, unselfish and uncalculating loyalty to it, strict and unyielding conscientiousness about it? Is it not the intellectual virtue of veracity and sincerity, which stands for ever opposed to the intellectual vice of temporising, of compromise, and of insincerity? To the unacademic ear it sounds strange to speak of intellectual virtues and vices, or of an intellectual conscience. It is the fashion of speech of the antique, and therefore, we are apt to think, antiquated, world. But one of the best lessons of academic study is the lesson of reverence for the wisdom of the past, and of insight into other points of view than our own. And it is not the least of the lessons which we owe to the ancient Greeks, that the intellectual life has virtues and vices of its own, that thought, no less than conduct, is the sphere of human duty. It is Plato who tells us of "the lie in the soul," which is hated equally of gods and men, of the fatal sin of disloyalty to truth, and who traces, with a skill all his own, the degeneration and corruption of the philosophic or truth-loving spirit by reason of its own lack of strength and purity of purpose, on the one hand, and temptations of the world on the other. The people, he tells us, are the great Sophist; it is their censure and applause that corrupts the virtue of their leaders, and the corruption of the best is the worst. But the roots of the evil lie deeper, and are found in the soul itself. It is our own fault, after all, if we allow the people to sophisticate us. There are souls that cannot be corrupted, that no bribe will tempt from their loyalty to truth, that no censure save the censure of the truth itself can move.

For each of us the choice lies between love of applause, of popularity, of honour, of gain, on the one hand, and love of truth, with all the sacrifice such love implies on the other. It is easier, and more profitable, to speak to the popular ear, to say what you are expected to say, what people want to hear, than to be faithful to the

truth as you yourself have learned to see it. It is easier to lower your standard, and to hold that "truth is that which is agreed on at the time of the agreement, and as long as the agreement lasts"; and "this is the philosophy," as Plato reminds us, "of many who do not altogether go along with Protagoras," of many who would repudiate with indignation the epithet of sceptic. Yet such a time-serving accommodating acceptance of public opinion in place of true knowledge is the most real and the worst of scepticisms. The modern practical and utilitarian spirit has invaded the intellectual life, and, while it has corrected some of the evils of Greek intellectualism, has produced new dangers and laid new snares for the spirit of loyalty to truth. It has led to the application of the practical and political criterion to the decision of questions which are not primarily practical or political, to the adoption of what a distinguished member of the House of Commons, who is at the same time a distinguished writer and thinker, has called "the House of Commons view of human life—a view excellent in its place, but most blighting and dwarfing out of it." We are too apt to ask ourselves and others, "Is such a belief safe? or is it likely to prevail?" rather than "Is it true?" We are too apt to consider the consequences rather than the duty of its acceptance or rejection. And the temptation always is to ask, "Is it safe for ourselves? What will be the consequence to us?" The primary virtue of the intellectual life, as it may be said to be the primary virtue of our entire life, is disinterestedness, unselfishness, disregard of the consequences—to ourselves at any rate—of doing our duty. Let no promise of reward, however subtle or however great, tempt you from that generous and uncalculating loyalty to truth which holds that any sacrifice made on its altar is worth making, that nothing which is purchased at the cost of truth is worth the price. If you are called to the office of a teacher or preacher of truth—and what vocation can be higher?—see that it is the truth and that it is your truth, the truth as you yourself have learned to see it, and nothing else than truth, nothing short of truth, and not somebody else's truth, that you give your fellows. The great secret of success



in the communication of truth, as it is the secret of all true success in life, is to be yourself, as the secret of failure, both here and elsewhere, is concealment and repression of one's own best selfhood, the effort to seem to be what one is not, and ought to be. The life of imitation is, as Plato said, the life of evil. The good life, the true life, is always original. Such fidelity to truth you will find to be its own reward, as untruthfulness is its own penalty. To sell the truth is to arrest the movement of your own intellectual life, to kill the faculty of further insight. To cherish the truth you know is to keep the eyes of your mind open to the larger vision of truth which the future has in store for you, to remain a student, a seeker, and, therefore, a finder of truth in all the days to come.

The courage which I have counselled is not the courage of dogmatism, of stereotyped, which is the same as dead, thought. It is the courage indeed of conviction, but it is also the courage of sincerity, and, therefore, of open-mindedness. There is no finality in the intellectual life, and you stand to-day at the starting-point rather than at the goal. But many of those whom I am now addressing doubtless look forward to a practical rather than to an intellectual career, and all of you will have to meet the claims of the practical life, and to answer for yourselves questions of a social and political as well as of a more spiritual character. What is your duty to truth in its practical, its social, and political aspects? Here, at least, it may be said, we must be governed by the principle of expediency, of utility, of practical possibility. Here, at least, is the sphere of compromise. Here the upholder of abstract principles and of uncompromising ideals stands condemned as a Utopian dreamer, a mere fanatic, a stupid doctrinaire. Has not Plato himself admitted the necessity of the political lie? Yet Plato also insists that the State must be founded on truth, on absolute spiritual truth; and if there is such a thing as truth at all, it must have a practical and social, and not a merely intellectual significance. There are principles of social and political well-being, and on no other foundation can that well-being be built. The life of practical and

political activity presents opportunities of disinterested service, of faithfulness to insight, and of that deeper wisdom which is the direct result of such faithfulness, no less than opportunities of selfish bidding for power and popularity, of temporising and compromise. And here, as in the intellectual life itself, the grand virtues are disinterestedness and courage. There is, of course, such a thing as practical wisdom—the wisdom that knows the time to speak and the time to keep silence, that discovers its opportunity, and does not waste its energy in futile effort, that understands the gradual and accumulative nature of human progress, and does not seek to accomplish at a blow what can only be consummated in the long process of time, that recognises the limitations of practical possibility, and does not attempt the impossible. And I might have counselled you to see that you despise not this wisdom. But perhaps it is hardly necessary that I should. This is one of the things that no university can teach ; it is the great lesson of life itself. It is more important that I warn you of the danger which awaits you, of setting up the limits of practical possibility short of the real and inevitable limits, of the temptation which the years and the world bring to all of us, of giving up, as impossible and Utopian, that which is certainly difficult, but which only the failure, after prolonged and strenuous effort, to attain it, can prove to be impossible. And even though we fail, our failure may be only a step, and a necessary step, in the progress of the nation, of the race, towards a later attainment. For, once more, it is not success for ourselves that we ought to seek. The interests at stake are too large to be measured by the narrow span of the individual and even of the generation. We must be content to sow for harvests which we shall never reap. But progress is impossible without experiment, without risk, without self-sacrifice. Let no blind reverence for the *status quo*, let no pusillanimous dread of the consequences of disturbing the existing order of things, restrain you from the effort to realise your ideals of social and political well-being. It is the duty of the educated man, and, above all, of the man to whom there has come any special practical insight, to educate

and form public opinion, not merely to follow it. ! Mankind needs leaders, and the true leader is always the teacher. The true escape from popular sophistication is only found in the education of the people. Be loyal to your own convictions at whatever cost ; beware of disloyalty to truth, remembering the words of one who has proved himself a leader of men, as well as a wise thinker on such topics, that "the law of things is that they who tamper with veracity, from whatever motive, are tampering with the vital force of human progress."

The sum of the counsel, which, taking courage from the duty to which I have been called, I have ventured to offer you, my fellow-graduates, is that you carry into the serious business of life the idealistic temper which is proper to youth and to the University. Be faithful to your ideals, and never dismiss them as the empty and impracticable dreams of youth. Youth is apt to be wiser than age in its prophetic insight, in its sublime faith in its own possibilities, in its splendid visions of the future for itself and for the world. Lose that faith and hope, let those visions "fade into the light of common day," exchange enthusiasm for cynicism ; and nothing will redeem your lives from commonplace, if not from worse. Believe in yourself, believe in your fellows, believe in God ; and who shall set the limit to the possibilities of your lives ? It was one of the great seers of this closing century, who kept the visions of his youth clear and present into the far reaches of a venerable age, who, standing on the confines of this mortal life, thus spoke to those he left behind, of "The Gleam," of the ideal that had hovered always over his life, like that of his own Merlin, and lit up its pathway to the last :—

"There on the border  
Of boundless Ocean,  
And all but in Heaven  
Hovers The Gleam.

Not of the sunlight,  
Not of the moonlight,  
Not of the starlight !  
O young Mariner,  
Down to the haven,

Call your companions,  
Launch your vessel,  
And crowd your canvas,  
And ere it vanishes  
Over the margin,  
After it, follow it,  
Follow The Gleam."

## 2. ADDRESS TO THE GRADUATES AT THE GRADUATION CEREMONIAL, JULY 13, 1922

FELLOW-GRADUATES,—It is my privilege to offer you, in the name of the Senatus, our cordial congratulations. You would not wish me to congratulate you on the close of your undergraduate course, of the comparatively irresponsible and care-free years which you have spent at the University, and which you are now to exchange for the active career of your choice or for the professional preparation for that career on which its shadows and responsibilities have already begun to fall. Yet even here there is matter for congratulation. The ceremonial of graduation which marks the close of one, marks at the same time the beginning of another, epoch in your intellectual life. It is for this reason that the ceremonial is so quaintly and paradoxically called elsewhere "Commencement." For to-day you commence your new career as Masters of Arts, masters of those studies which you have so far followed under the guidance of others. The real significance of this ceremonial is that you have to-day entered into full membership of the University, and it is my privilege to welcome you to its fellowship and to suggest to you something of what it means.

The University, as distinguished from a mere professional school, seeks, in its professional no less really than in its non-professional Faculties, to provide a liberal education, to inspire its students with a pure love of knowledge for its own sake and apart from the professional uses to which it can be put. More especially in the Faculty of Science is this the pervading atmosphere. The utilitarian is the very negation of the scientific, as of the academic spirit. But it is in the Faculty of Arts,

the home of the Humanities, including the fundamental Sciences, that the spirit of liberal study is most directly and explicitly cultivated ; and this is the real argument for the inclusion of a period of study in that Faculty in the curriculum of every student.

A liberally educated man is alone truly educated ; the man who lacks this education may be a skilful craftsman, but is not an educated man. Immanuel Kant has well described that superficial utilitarianism against which we need more than ever to be on our guard in these days. "Since in early youth it cannot be known what ends are likely to occur to us in the course of life, parents seek to have their children taught a great many things, and provide for their skill in the use of means to all sorts of arbitrary ends ; and this anxiety is so great that they commonly neglect to form and correct their judgment on the value of the things which may be chosen as ends." Even if we suppose the educational psychologist to be able to diagnose the special and characteristic aptitude of the individual, the substitution of such an intelligent and definite for the blind and vague utilitarianism which Kant so ironically described, would only result in still greater educational evil ; such a premature specialisation would only the more certainly deprive the youth of his human birthright, would only the more certainly and effectively sacrifice the man to the craftsman.

It is to a greater philosopher than Kant that we are indebted for the true definition of education. The educated man, says Aristotle, is the man whose judgment is educated, so that he knows what to expect from the special sciences and arts. "Each man can form a judgment about what he knows, and is called a 'good judge' of that—of any special matter when he has received a special education therein, a 'good judge' without qualification when he has received a universal education." I am indebted to my friend and former pupil, the President of Amherst College, for a modern rendering of this Aristotelian definition: "I would define a liberally educated man as one who tries to understand the whole of knowledge as well as one man can." No wise man will nowadays boast, with Bacon,

that he has "taken all knowledge for his province." The day of the Encyclopædists is gone for ever. To know all there is to know, or rather all that it is possible for one man to know, about any subject, we must limit ourselves to that one subject. But it is no less true that, really to know it, we must know something of its relations to other subjects; the mere specialist does not know even his own subject. A graduate in Arts ought to have studied a variety of typical subjects—literary, scientific, historical, and philosophical, and above all to have learned something of their mutual relations. He ought to be able to find his way about in the world of knowledge, to know the general lie and situation of the "things of the mind." He ought to have acquired the beginnings of that "culture" or "universal education" without which no man, however "expert," is truly "educated."

Yes; but only the beginnings. It is the function of the University to introduce the student to the world of knowledge; to awaken intellectual interests, not to satisfy them; to lay the foundations on which the student himself must build the structure of his own intellectual life. The fellowship to which we to-day bid you welcome is not so much that of fellow-graduates as that of fellow-students. We have tried to teach you how to study, and he who has really learned this lesson will not leave us to ourselves when he quits our classrooms, but will remain with us, in spirit if not in bodily presence, our fellow-student to the end. The figure of the young runner bearing the lighted torch which crowns the dome of the Old College is a fit symbol of the academic life. The race which he is running is the race of life itself. As the race continues, and the runner grows old in years, he does not slacken or grow weary, for he remains young in spirit; and ever as he runs, the torch of knowledge illumines the path before him. Need I urge you to keep alive the torch which you have lighted at these fires, not to weary in the race on which you have started here?

But such knowledge has a social, and not a merely individual utility. Plato came very near the truth when he claimed that true statesmanship was the ex-

pression of the highest "philosophic" wisdom, and Aristotle when he insisted that the Legislator, who is to frame the constitution of the State, to keep it true to its fundamental purpose, to make it the medium and instrument of human well-being, must first understand the nature of that well-being.

And if we need to learn how to live together as members of a single economic and political society, not less do we need to learn how to live together as members of an international society, a society of nations. Recent experience has shown us how far the nations are from having learned this lesson. Many of you have seen with your own eyes what war is, have borne your own glorious part in the defence of our common country and our common civilisation. You have emerged from the conflict with a deepened conviction of the iniquity and the folly of war, with a confirmed resolve that war shall cease.

When we joined in the conflict of the nations, we said—and we meant it—that so far as we were concerned, this was a war to end war. Now we know better. Bitter experience has taught us that this war has not ended war, that no war will end war, that wars will never cease until the nations have learned the art of living and acting together in the service of a common good. We must no longer be content to use the blessed time of peace to prepare for war; we must so use it as to make war impossible, unthinkable. As we resume our interrupted studies in the University, as we turn what is at once the saddest and the most glorious page in its history, let us see to it that we use well the peace and leisure which our brothers have purchased for us with their lives, that we so use that opportunity that they might be satisfied that they have not died in vain. The University should be the home of peace, of that spirit of Humanity whose growing strength alone will make war impossible. It knows no distinctions of race or nationality. It is a city of the spirit whose freedom is open to all who prove themselves worthy of its citizenship. The modern University ought to be the successor of the mediæval Church, the common mother of the early universities, which overleapt national boundaries,

and made men everywhere realise their unity as partakers of a common spiritual nature and a common spiritual life.

The mark of the educated man, the man of liberal culture, is that he is emancipated from the provincialisms and prejudices begotten of the narrower lives that are lived outside the University. He is the man who has learned to sympathise with and understand other ideals, of other peoples and other times, ancient and modern ; who has penetrated beneath the superficial differences and idiosyncrasies that divide man from man and nation from nation to those elemental and universal interests which unite us in a common humanity. Socrates, the ideal representative of the higher education for all later times, claimed to be a teacher of statesmen. Let the Universities be true to their high vocation, and the lessons of humanism and of human solidarity which they impress upon their members will bear their inevitable fruit in the statesmanship of the future. And short of statesmanship, the educated man ought everywhere to be a leader of men, a powerful force in the formation of that public opinion which, in a modern democratic State, is the ultimate source of political action. It is for you, as educated men and women, as members of a great University, to take your part in public life, to insist upon the academic ideals of international righteousness and friendship, upon the supreme claims of humanity. It is a duty which you owe to your country, to humanity itself ; it is a debt which you owe to your Alma Mater, for these are her ideals.



## APPENDIX C

HALIFAX REVISITED<sup>1</sup>

THE Editor of this 'Review,' in asking me to send him some reminiscences of my life in Halifax when I was Professor of Philosophy in Dalhousie University, was kind enough to say that he did not mean thereby to suggest that I had reached the age of anecdotage. It would have been quite pardonable if he had indulged in that supposition, for it is now thirty-five years since I first took up the duties of that position, my period of service having been from 1886 to 1892. Since I left Dalhousie, I have served for another six years in American universities (Brown and Cornell), and I am now in the course of my twenty-fourth year in the University of Edinburgh. Perhaps the natural inclination, in looking back over such a long period to the years of my earliest professorial experience at Dalhousie, would be to indulge in that anecdotage which is one of the marks of advancing age, and it would be easy to write an article composed of reminiscences. But I could not satisfy myself that such a paper would be worthy of the high standard set by the first numbers of the 'Review.' I will therefore attempt something of the kind which I ventured to offer to the members of the Halifax Canadian Club in the address which I had the honour to give when I revisited the city in September 1919 to take part, as the representative of the University of Edinburgh, as well as in the

<sup>1</sup> 'The Dalhousie Review,' 1922.

capacity of an old Dalhousie professor, in the centenary of Dalhousie. What I then attempted was a comparison and contrast between the Halifax of the time when I was a citizen and Halifax of the present day, supplemented by some of the reflections suggested by such a comparison and contrast of "Then" and "Now." And I am glad of the opportunity to indicate how these reflections, more particularly as regards the relations of Canada to Great Britain, have been modified by further reflection and by the impressions derived from a pretty intimate intercourse with the members of the Canadian Club of Edinburgh University which was organised just before the war by Dr Gerald Grant of Halifax, and of which I have been from the beginning honorary president.

Any impressions I had of "Halifax Unvisited" were, I fear, of the vaguest possible description. I knew no one there except my predecessor in the Chair of Philosophy, Dr Schurman, to whose kindness I owed my appointment, and whom I had known as a student, slightly my senior, at Edinburgh. Dr Louis Jordan, who was minister of St Andrew's Church for some years, was also my fellow-student in Edinburgh and my class-fellow. But from neither had I derived any impression of Canadian or Halignonian life beyond the fact that it was very much more stirring and "go-ahead" than that of the Old Country. Beyond that I was left to the resources of my own imagination. But the imagination does not readily work without more definite materials than I had at my command, and mine refused to paint a picture of the place or the people. My experience was therefore quite unlike that of Wordsworth and Yarrow, partly no doubt because I lacked the poet's imagination, but partly also because Halifax and Canada were too young to have gathered round them the halo of a legendary past. When I first visited Halifax, I had practically no preconceptions to undo; my mind was almost a *tabula rasa*, ready to receive the impressions produced by the place itself as it actually was in those far-off days.

I well remember my arrival on a Saturday morning early in October 1886 at the North Street station, where I was met after my long railway journey from New York

by President Forrest and my host, Professor Gordon MacGregor. The warm welcome which I received from these two colleagues, and the delightful hospitality I experienced at the MacGregor home in Gottingen Street, made me feel no more a stranger in a strange land. That afternoon MacGregor and I looked in on Professor Alexander in his rooms in Spring Garden Road. We three, who were soon to become such good friends, had a long walk round the North-West Arm, and in the course of it met another colleague, also destined to become a very dear friend, Professor Macdonald, better known to generations of Dalhousians as "Charlie." Before the evening of my first day in Halifax, therefore, I had not only got a wonderful impression of the beauty of the surroundings of the city, but felt that I was already in friendly relations with several of my future colleagues.

The college opened the following week. The autumn convocation was held in the handsome hall of the Legislative Council. I was duly impressed with the dignity of the place and proceedings, and considerably perturbed by the loud calls of the students at the close for "Seth." In response to that imperious call I managed to say a few halting words, which were so kindly received that I felt that the students' welcome was as warm as that of my colleagues. It was the beginning of an experience of the kindheartedness of my Dalhousie students, which was never clouded by the slightest misunderstanding from that day to the end.

Next day the regular work of the session was begun in the old building on the Grand Parade, which then occupied the site of the present City Hall. It was the last year of that old building; before the next session the new college, now called Forrest Hall, was ready for occupation. There was a certain charm about the old college, small and simple and unpretentious as it was, that never gathered round the new brick building to which we moved in the autumn of 1887. It also lent itself to "scrimmages"—a notable and characteristic feature of Dalhousie life in those days—much better than the new building; in fact I do not remember a single event of the kind after we left the Grand Parade.

I always feel that I was a member of the "old brigade"

of Dalhousie professors. Johnson and Macdonald, who by their thorough methods had once for all established the standards alike of teaching and of examination, were still in the plenitude of their powers, and a meeting of the little Faculty or Senate when "Charlie" and "Johnny" were in "form" was a thing to be remembered. The present distinguished president was then only a "Munro Tutor," and no other member of the present Faculty of Arts had as yet entered upon his duties, though Professor MacMechan joined the Faculty during my time in succession to Alexander when the latter went to Toronto, and Judge Russell was already a member of the Faculty of Law.

I have the pleasantest recollections of the social life of the city and of its abounding hospitality. One of the things that especially impressed me indeed, was the amount of time and energy that was devoted to social entertainment and amusement. Men, as well as women, seemed always to have the leisure required for the rather exacting demands of "Society," and, rightly or wrongly, it seemed to me that the claims of business were secondary to those of pleasure. The life of the city was not nearly so strenuous and "go-ahead" as I had expected. In this respect it contrasted sharply with the life of the Old Country as I had known it even in Edinburgh, which is supposed to be a city of considerable leisure and rather lacking in business enterprise. One read in the newspapers of the doings of that higher "Society" in which the officers of the Navy and Army were the leading figures, and which seemed to be a perpetual round of gaiety and excitement. The fact that Halifax was the Canadian headquarters of the Imperial forces seemed to have the most far-reaching effects upon the "social" atmosphere of the place, and I suppose made it different from that of other Canadian cities even at that time. To me it seemed, with other causes, to produce that "old colonial" feeling which was, as I thought, so characteristic of the place. I found myself in a "New England," which reproduced with a new emphasis and consciousness all the prejudices and prepossessions, the customs and ideals, of the old land. The ambition of Halifax, as I knew it in

those days, seemed to me to be not so much to develop a new life of its own, a new social type, as to reproduce the life of Old England in the New World across the sea.

The loyalty of the people to the British Crown struck me as even more intense, or at any rate more articulate, than that of the Old Country itself. There were indeed mutterings of discontent with the "colonial" position, and suggestions in certain quarters of exchanging the unsatisfactory relation of dependence upon the Mother Country either for independence or for annexation to the United States. The project of Imperial Federation was beginning to be talked about, but the idea of any such readjustment of the relations of the Dominions to the Mother Country as has since been realised, would have been repudiated both by those who were satisfied with the *status quo* and by those who felt that the manifest destiny of Canada lay in one of the other directions indicated above. But when it is remembered that those were the days of Sir John Macdonald and Sir Charles Tupper, it will be seen that neither of the latter alternatives belonged to the sphere of "practical politics."

Although I had made one or two hurried visits to the old city since I left in 1892, I had not seen it for twenty years when I revisited it in September 1919 for the Dalhousie centenary. I once more approached it, as I had done for the first time in 1886, by land, this time by way of the beautiful Annapolis Valley, which I had a great desire to see again, and the loveliness of which in the September sunshine impressed me more than ever. As I left the United States behind me, I felt that I was no longer in a foreign country but among mine own people. A hundred things reminded me of home, and when I arrived at the new station in South Street and at the hospitable house of Mr and Mrs George Campbell on Young Avenue, that impression was abundantly confirmed. Yet it was "another" Halifax to which I had returned. This was due not merely to the passage of the years and the absence of so many of my former friends and colleagues. Nor was it merely that Halifax too had been through the war and bore sad traces of its part in the great struggle. It was because in the

meantime Halifax and Canada had not stood still, but had moved rapidly and far, and the whole atmosphere of the place had changed. The "old colonial" feeling had disappeared, and in its place there was a new consciousness of partnership in a great Canadian nation. The old attachment to English customs and ideals, the old effort to reproduce the life of the Old Country, had disappeared; and when I ventured to speak to the Canadian Club of what I conceived to be the truer and larger meaning of the old word "England," and to plead for the retention of the dear old name hallowed by so many associations, I felt that I had struck a false note, to which my audience made no real response, though they were too courteous to hint at their dissent. Nothing could have brought home more clearly to me the changed attitude of the people towards the Mother Country. The more I reflected upon this little bit of evidence, and the more I saw and heard during my week's visit to Halifax and during my subsequent stay in Toronto as the guest of my old Dalhousie colleague, Professor Alexander, the more convinced did I become that a new political consciousness had developed in the interval that separated "Then" from "Now." In that interval Canada had grown to be a nation, and its whole life was dominated by its new consciousness of nationhood. The new-born nation felt that it had a life and a destiny of its own to achieve, and that that life and destiny could not be a mere reproduction of England's, but must be the result of the new reactions to the new conditions. Since my return to Scotland I have seen a good deal of the Canadian students who are studying at Edinburgh University, and an address which I gave to their Canadian Club was followed by a discussion of the relations of the Dominion to the United Kingdom which had to be adjourned to another meeting, so great was the interest in the question. This frank interchange of views confirmed me in the belief that the impressions which I received during my Canadian visit of 1919 were fundamentally correct.

The war has no doubt done much to give definiteness to the views of Canada, as well as of the other self-governing Dominions, as to the meaning of that hitherto

vague entity, "the British Empire," or, as we are now learning to call it and to think of it, "the British Commonwealth." The fact that the Dominions signed the Peace Treaty as independent powers or sovereign States, and did not simply authorise the United Kingdom to sign in their name and on their behalf, was the first explicit recognition of their new status, and a further explicit recognition of it was given in the position assigned to the Dominions alongside the Mother Country in the League of Nations. But these official acts were simply the recognition of the *fait accompli*, the culmination of a movement that had been long maturing. The war itself did much to reveal to the constituent elements of the Empire their essential solidarity, their community of interest. But it at the same time immensely accelerated the pace of the process of national development in the several Dominions, and forced upon them the question of their relation to Great Britain and to one another. It became clear that the only ground on which the Dominions could consent to stand alongside Great Britain was that of common interest, and that never again could they be expected to take part in a war to the declaration of which they had not been parties.

Lord Bryce has remarked that the Annexationism of forty years ago has quite died away as a policy on our side of the line, nor do I suppose that there is now any serious talk of separation from Great Britain. But there certainly is a widespread demand for independence, and, except as regards foreign policy, independence has already been achieved. The proposal for a separate Canadian embassy at Washington has raised the question of diplomatic independence. Mr Lloyd George's statement, quoted in the July number of this 'Review,' that we continue to speak of the "British Empire" only "for historical and sentimental reasons," is a striking recognition of the change that has taken place, and "imperial conferences" of the premiers of the various Dominions and the United Kingdom seem to have quite superseded the ideal of "imperial federation." It is for the Dominions to say what their relation to Great Britain and to one another is to be, and the most

likely forecast would seem to be a more intimate League of Nations, a League of independent States rather than a single inclusive State, the bond being that of a common interest and a common loyalty to the Throne, a common inheritance from the past and common ideals of political freedom and representative government.

The new tide of national life made itself felt in all directions. Halifax was no longer the sleepy old city which I had known so well ; it seemed to me to have entered upon a new and more strenuous business career. The splendid ocean " terminals," which were approaching completion, reminded one of the commercial activity of New York ; they were a striking contrast to the old wharves of my youth. I had the pleasure of meeting many of the leading business men of the city in the Halifax Club and at one of the luncheons of the Rotary Club, and I was much impressed by their keenness and enthusiasm. It was peculiarly gratifying to me to see the imposing new Dalhousie which is rising on the splendid Studley site, and to witness the enthusiastic devotion of the citizens to the University. That devotion has since been signally proved by the results of the campaign for additional endowments. The new hostels for both men and women students will supply a need which was sorely felt in my time, when there was absolutely no provision of the kind. From what I saw during my visit, and from what I have since heard from President Stanley Mackenzie, whom I had the pleasure of seeing in Edinburgh last summer when he was a delegate to the Congress of British Universities, I feel certain that Dalhousie has entered upon a new period of prosperity. She has now the means of realising those high ideals which she has long entertained. In the success of her recent effort I see the evidence at once of the increased resources of her friends and of their increasing loyalty to the University. Such a result would have been inconceivable in my time.

The whole aspect of the city had changed for the better since I knew it. The old wooden side-walks, always more or less out of repair, had given way to fine asphalt pavements, and handsome stone buildings had taken the place of the plain frame structures which



were then so numerous even in the central streets of the city. The North End in particular had altered quite beyond recognition. Nothing interested me more than the inspection which I was privileged to make of some of the new houses which have taken the place of the streets destroyed in the Halifax disaster. A better bit of town-planning could not well be imagined, and the houses themselves are most attractive. That so much should have been done, and so well done, in the short time that had elapsed since that sad event, was a further confirmation of the impression otherwise received of the new energy of the old city. For although, like all who come to Canada from the old world, I was struck, even in my time, by the absence of poverty as I had known it at home, Halifax was then a city of many "mean streets," and among the meanest were those which have now disappeared from the North End. The South End was, even in my time, a beautiful district, but it has now extended very much, especially in the direction of the incomparable "Arm." Round the Bedford Basin, too, there seemed to have been much new building. Halifax is indeed "beautiful for situation," and it was gratifying to see how the city had risen to its unique opportunity since "Then."

## APPENDIX D

## LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

- ‘Philosophy as “the Science of Sciences.”’ Inaugural Address delivered at the Convocation of Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, October 18, 1887. (Reprinted in *Dalhousie Gazette*, Vol. xx. pp. 1-7.)
- ‘Freedom as Ethical Postulate’ (Blackwood & Sons), 1891.
- ‘A Study of Ethical Principles’ (Blackwood & Sons and Scribner’s), 1894.
- ‘The Scottish Contribution to Moral Philosophy.’ Inaugural Lecture in the University of Edinburgh, October 21, 1898 (Blackwood & Sons). (Reprinted in *Philosophical Review*, Vol. vii. pp. 561-582.)
- ‘English Philosophers and Schools of Philosophy’ (Dent & Sons), 1912.

## ARTICLES :—

- “The Evolution of Morality,” *Mind*, O.S., Vol. xiv. pp. 27-49. (1889.)
- “The Theory of Punishment,” *International Journal of Ethics*, Vol. ii. pp. 232-239. (1892.)
- “The Truth of Empiricism,” *Philosophical Review*, Vol. ii. pp. 544-556. (1893.)

## ARTICLES—(continued):

- "Are we 'Conscious Automata'?" *Philosophical Review*, Vol. iii. pp. 278-288. (1894.)
- "The Roots of Agnosticism," *New World*, Vol. iii. pp. 458-470. (1894.)
- "Is Pleasure the Summum Bonum?" *International Journal of Ethics*, Vol. vi. pp. 409-424. (1896.)
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- "The Standpoint and Method of Ethics," *Philosophical Review*, Vol. vi. pp. 275-287. (1897.)
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- "On Certain Alleged Defects in Christian Morality," *Hibbert Journal*, Vol. vi. pp. 101-117. (1907.)
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- "The Alleged Fallacies in Mill's 'Utilitarianism,'" *Philosophical Review*, Vol. xvii. pp. 469-488. (1908.)
- "A Scottish Philosopher in France," *Transactions of the Franco-Scottish Society*, Vol. v. pp. 208-218. (1910.)
- "Halifax Revisited," *Dalhousie Review*, Vol. ii. pp. 333-339. (1922.)
- "Pragmatist and Idealist Ethics," *Philosophical Review*, Vol. xxxiii. pp. 182-197. (1923.)

## CRITICAL NOTICES AND REVIEWS :—

- Bosanquet, 'Knowledge and Reality,' *Mind*, Vol. xi. pp. 94-97. (1886.)
- F. E. Abbot, 'Scientific Theism,' *Ibid.*, pp. 409-414. (1886.)
- John Caird, 'Philosophy of Religion,' *The Theologue*, Vol. i. pp. 50-52.
- Fouillée, 'L'Avenir de la Metaphysique,' *Mind*, Vol. xv. pp. 401-404. (1890.)
- Fouillée, 'L'Evolutionnisme des Idées-forces,' *Ibid.*, Vol. xvi. pp. 119-125. (1891.)
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- Ladd, 'Philosophy of Knowledge,' *Mind*, N.S., Vol. vii. pp. 243-248. (1898.)
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- Henry Sidgwick, 'Lectures on Green, Spencer, and Martineau,' *Ibid.*, Vol. xii. pp. 548-553. (1903.)
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